



LECTURER IN ENGLISH, GOVERNMENT COLLEGE, LAHORE.

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KACHERI ROAD    ::    ::    L A H O R E

By the Same Author

IMPORTANT SPEECHES OF JAWAHARLAL NEHRU  
LIFE OF JAWAHARLAL NEHRU  
SUBHAS BOSE AND HIS IDEAS

Selections from Mahatma Gandhi

EDITED BY JAG PARVESH CHANDER

TEACHINGS OF MAHATMA GANDHI

(Foreword by Babu Rajendra Prasad)

TAGORE AND GANDHI ARGUE

ETHICS OF FASTING

GITA THE MOTHER

THE UNSEEN POWER

THE GOOD LIFE

GANDHI AGAINST FASCISM

THE CONGRESS CASE (Foreword by Mr. K. M. Munshi)



**Every inch a statesman !** From beneath the shades of his felt hat, the eyes of Jawaharlal glint like a rapier into the devildom of Western diplomacy.





8

Arm in arm, breast by breast,  
march Jawaharlal and Dr. Khan Sahib.  
This warmth of affection is a symbol of  
Hindu-Muslim Unity which is so dear to  
the heart of every nationalist.

I marvel at my good fortune.  
To serve India in the battle for  
freedom is honour enough!  
To serve her under a leader like  
Mahatma Gandhi is doubly fortunate.  
But to suffer for the dear country!!  
What greater good could befall an  
Indian unless it be Death for the  
Cause or the Full Realisation of  
our glorious Dream!!!

Jawaharlal



## P R E F A C E

A BIOGRAPHY is not the same thing as a biographical study. The former is objective rather than subjective. The latter is subjective rather than objective. A biography may be only the narrative of a hero ; a biographical study—if a study at all—has to be more or less critical and psychological in its attitude towards the hero. It may be a critical appreciation. And mine is definitely one.

There is a great pleasure in studying the life of a hero. There is a greater pleasure in studying it between the lines. But how many of us have the time, energy and the intellectual faculty for bringing our minds to bear upon the master-minds of Shakespeare, Goethe, Jesus Christ or Napoleon?—Kalidas, Tagore, Mahatma Gandhi or Jawaharlal? And yet if we do not study a great man between the lines, what is the use of studying him at all?

As the reader runs through these pages, he will find that this book is an excellent critical appreciation of the life, work, speeches, career and character

of Jawaharlal Nehru. But to imagine that this book could ever be anything more than a sincere attempt to measure a mighty mountain would end in a raking disappointment. It is a maxim in creative criticism that it requires a poet to understand a poet. And it is no easy job to rise up to the level of Jawaharlal even for the brief space of an hour. "Poetry," said Coleridge, "at its strongest destroys the world to create a new." And comet-like career of Jawaharlal Nehru is essentially poetry at its strongest.

It would be preposterous to presume that all the facets of the diamond could be manifested in such a small book. It would require thousands and thousands of pages to study all aspects of the hero. Consequently, I have concentrated my attention on one aspect only—the political side. This Book may be defined as a study in statesmanship of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru.

J. S. B.

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## INTRODUCTION

The career of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has been an embodiment of "Service Above Self." His has been a statesmanship of selflessness and self-sacrifice. He remains unfaded and unfading in the whirling, bursting world in which we live to-day. Pandit Nehru is a live figure when the very notion of the abiding seems a myth. He is a scholar, a patriot, a lover of truth, an unflinching opponent of whatsoever things are debasing. He represents in his blood a heritage of culture. He has given his life to his country. His devotion to internationalism has lent to him an added glory. His ideas and ideals, like the snows of the Himalayas, convert themselves into the melted floods which fertilise the globe.

### THE GREAT DEMOCRAT

"Nehru is to-day the great democrat, of the world," states the American publisher's foreword to Nehru's Autobiography. "Not Churchill, nor Roosevelt, not Chiang Kai-Shek, in a sense not even Gandhi, stands as firm as Nehru does for government by the consent of people and for the integrity of the individual. He scorns and despises Nazism and Fascism." ~~for~~

Pandit Nehru has a deal of communism in him, but even then he is not a communist. "I resist," he says, "the communist tendency to treat communism as a holy doctrine. I feel also that too much violence is associated with communist methods." He wants India to be "a united, free, democratic country, closely associated in a world federation with other free nations." Nehru and his programme are held in high esteem by the liberal Englishmen. Soon after the Second



World War broke out in Europe, it was proposed that Nehru be made the Premier of India. The importance of Nehru's statesmanship has been well summed up by an enthusiastic democrat as follows :—

*"To understand Britain*

*We must understand the British Empire.*

*To understand the Empire*

*We must understand India.*

*And to understand India*

*We must understand Nehru and his attitude to the world."*

Nehru thinks in world terms. He has been three times President of the Indian National Congress. He declined the fourth term. Next only to Gandhi, he is the leader of the millions of India. He fights for the freedom of India. But that is the only issue at the moment. He stands for Asiatic federation. That will be the issue of a few decades. He looks beyond to the world order. He thinks of mankind as a whole. In an article in the *Atlantic Monthly*, Nehru wrote :

"India is far from America, but more and more our thoughts go to this great democratic country, which seems, most alone, to keep the torch of democratic freedom light in a world given over to imperialism and fascism, violence and aggression, and opportunism of the worst type."

### A SMOULDERING VOLCANO

Nehru said that there could be no turning back after the betrayal at Munich. No remaining where we are. The old order is bankrupt. It has to be thrown out, root and branch. Any compromise in the big step will only find us where we were. That is why he has been so thunderous both in words and in works. He is a smouldering volcano that has not yet been exhausted. Rather he grows in power more and more. The extent of his energy is challenging. He shakes

and sweeps the dirt and dust accumulated by the sins of centuries. From the very beginning he has been abreast of his times. Boer War interested him. The Japanese victory over Russia fascinated his mind. While yet a child, he "shivered with fright, mixed with resentment at the treatment of a servant." Life smote him promptly. *Q. A. C. P.*

This wonderful man! Jawaharlal is first and foremost a man of principle. He possesses all the requisites that make for a dedicated career. The pursuit of international ideals is his great joy of activity. "The real joy of life," says Pandit Nehru, "is to work for a great purpose, to understand it and put all the strength and energy of the integrated personality into it. Therein you will experience the full joy of achievement." If there be a delay in the realization of our goal, what does it matter? Let our steps march in the right direction. Let our eyes look steadily in front. There is a measure of achievement in the pursuit itself of a mighty purpose. Bernard Shaw nicely expresses the ideas of Jawaharlal: "This is the true joy in life, the being used for the purpose recognised by yourself as a mighty one; the being thoroughly worn out before we are thrown on the scrap-heap; the being a force of nature, instead of feverish, selfish little clod of ailments and grievances complaining that the world will not devote itself to making you happy."

Jawaharlal has always been a strong supporter of British democracy but an equally strong opponent of British imperialism. When the Second World War started, Nehru declared that India's position was not one of refusing to fight on England's side. "But we want to be free to make our choice," he said, "Right now we are in a situation in which we would be asked to fight for democracy when we do not have democracy ourselves." Nevertheless, Nehru declared that to launch civil disobedience merely because Britain was in peril would be "an act derogatory to India's

honour.” Nehru said, “If the War is really a war for democracy and freedom, then imperialism must end and independence and self-determination of India must be acknowledged.” If that is done, he said, “India would throw her full weight into the struggle.” But John Bull would not yield. “I am sorry,” wrote Nehru, “for in spite of my hostility to British imperialism and all imperialisms, I have loved much that was England, and I should have liked to keep the silken bonds of the spirit between India and England.”

### PRACTICAL PHILOSOPHER

Pandit Nehru is ever prepared to meet the demands of a principled statesmanship. Unlike diplomats he is ready to fulfil the duties of a strictly principled life. His life has been a continuous, consistent and considered reasonableness of sweet sunshine behaviour. His practical philosophy embraces the entire fabric of life. His political outlook is a comprehensive challenge to a thoroughly decayed system. The world is in a state of flux. It suffers from pain, doubt and agony. The globe is given over to imperialism and fascism. Like Buddha, Jawaharlal has been moved by the yearnings of humanity. He has been touched by its sins. He has been at pains to find out what the malady is. He has been at pains to find out what the remedy should be. The decadence of the old order is the disease. Time may come when the millions, enlightened and encouraged, may follow in his wake of democracy.

If the old order is dead, Pandit Nehru does not lament. The devil has deserved the discredited doom. Jawaharlal Nehru is waging a holy war. It is a democratic crusade. He refuses to be perturbed by the ghost of the vanishing imperialism. He has set the golden example of practising much and preaching little. With the strength of a giant

he is ringing out the old and ringing in the new. Faithful and unflagging, he is true to himself and the great ideals of nationalism. He is terribly earnest in his ideals of universal brotherhood, and nothing can dislodge him from the democratic platform. His fiery inspiration is backed up with a lifelong perspiration. He speaks vehemently and acts vigorously. His darings and doings are an excellent testimony. "For myself," he says, "I delight in warfare. It makes me feel that I am alive." Danger does not seem terrible to him. He calls it a pleasant companion, because it adds to the zest and zeal of life. His visit to Spain impressed him powerfully. He found himself at peace with himself in the midst of death and destruction. "There was light there," he says, "the light of courage and determination and of doing something worth while." Y. G. Krishnamurti thus writes about him :—

"Of the mightiest imaginative power and yet at the same time a practical statesman, dowered with insight and resolution ; no longer a youth and not yet an old man ; an idealist of to-morrow with the power of living in the present ; an Aryan in the deepest sense of the term and culled to reconcile and represent a synthesis of cultures, Jawaharlal is the crown and consummation of India's genius and patriotism."

### THE BEARER OF GOOD TIDINGS.

Jawaharlal has taken the cause of entire mankind to his heart and has chosen to carry the fiery cross not only on behalf of India, but also on behalf of China, Abyssinia, Spain and Russia. His "chief interest in politics is the raising of the masses and the removal of barriers of class and wealth and the equalisation of society." He clamours that "no gain that may come to us is worth anything unless it helps in removing the grievous burden on our

masses." The poor peasants, no wonder, shower their affections on him. They look on Jawaharlal with loving and hopeful eyes. For them he is the bearer of good tidings. He leads them to the promised land. These semi-naked sons and daughters of India filled Pandit Nehru with a sense of over-flowing gratitude. "A new picture of India seemed to rise before me," he says, "naked, starving, crushed and utterly miserable." A new responsibility frightened him. "We cannot rest," he says, "for rest is a betrayal of the cause we have espoused, the pledge we have taken ; it is a betrayal of the millions who never rest."

The freedom of India is a universal cry. It is essentially a world demand. The future of mankind hangs by it. Free India will strengthen the morale of the progressive forces throughout the world. It will lessen the strength of the reactionary forces. Nehru's sense of patriotism is humanitarian. He does not regard India as a portion cut off from the universe. His love for India is a part of international brotherhood. Jawaharlal is the *avatar* of incarnate enthusiasm. Whole and sôul, he has thrown himself in the furnace of freedom. He is fighting on the entire humane front.

Jawaharlal has assiduously made himself a perfect statesman. He passes through all the tests of patriotism. He has sunk his personality completely in the noble cause of the country. "Have you forgotten all about your name, your fame, your wives, your children, your property, even your own bodies?" says a writer. "That is the first step to become a patriot—the very first step." That is quite true of Nehru. Again, instead of spending his energies in frothy talks, Jawaharlal has found a practical solution to bring the masses out of living death. Moreover, he has got the will to surmount the mountain-high obstructions. Sword in hand he stands up against the whole world. Like Mahatma

Gandhi he has put himself under the strictest discipline. Gandhiji has very well described the power of discipline :

"Steam becomes a mighty power only when it allows itself to be imprisoned in a strong little reservoir and produces tremendous motion and carries huge weights by permitting itself a tiny and measured outlet "

### A MAN OF VISION

Jawaharlal is a man of vision, understanding and equipment. He has taken upon his shoulders the terrific task of universal emancipation. Foresight is the keynote of Nehru's statesmanship. He has a faith in the goodness of man. He feels a strong purposiveness of the scheme of things. He believes in the conception of a harmonious composite whole. He views problems in their relation to the totality of life. He has a balanced, receptive and flexible mind. His intellect is wax to receive and iron to retain. He breathes away his shackles like a cobweb. There is nothing hide-bound in him. His adaptability is a good indication of his overflowing vitality. While thinking of the past he fixes his mind upon the whole. "I realize," he says, "that in the vast elemental conflicts that are raging, national issue must not absorb our attention and we must view the picture as a whole." Every step is thoughtfully taken in the statesmanship of Nehru. "To accept unthinkingly what one cannot appreciate or willingly agree," says Nehru, "is to produce mental flabbiness and paralysis." No great movement can be wrought on this basis; certainly not. Nehru finds that the whole world is one vast question mark. Every country is in the melting-pot. The age of faith is past. There is no comfort and stability anywhere. There is questioning about everything. Everywhere there is doubt and restlessness. The foundations of society are in the process of transformation. The old-established ideas are being attacked. The outcome hangs in the balance. Never has

there been so much anxious questioning. There is a continuous process of change. Revolution is going on all over the world. Everywhere the statesmen are at their wit's end. They grope about in the dark.

There is a general break-up of the old order. "These broken eggs," says Nehru, "cannot be put together again." The world of yesterday is dead. The world of to-day is dying. All the king's horses and all the king's men will not be able to keep it alive. "The new order may be good or bad," say's Nehru, "but it will be entirely different from the old." The British Empire represents the dying order. So it will pass away. The present economic system will give place to another. "All over the world to-day," says Nehru, "behind the political and economic conflicts there is a spiritual crisis, a questioning of old values and beliefs and a search for a way out of the tangle." In India the spiritual conflict is acute. The roots of India still go deep down into the ancient soil. Though the future beckons, the past still holds us back.

### THE INTERNATIONAL STATESMAN

The brief day of European domination is already approaching its end. Europe has ceased to be the centre of interest. The future lies with America and Asia. Let us not forget that for millennia the legions of Asia over-ran Europe. Modern Europe itself consists of the descendants of Asia. It was, also, India that broke the power of Alexander finally. But ~~then~~ Pandit Nehru is an international statesman and not a sentimental nationalist. "But none of us desires," he says, "that the legions of Asia or Europe should over-run the continents again. We have all had enough of them."

And where lies the disease? Pandit Nehru is worried about the unhealthy growth of capital. "And the disease seems to be of the essence of capitalism," he says, "and

grows with it till it eats and destroys the very system which created it."

Jawaharlal can focus his energies at will on a particular line of action. This is a testimony to his hard work. "Self-learning, self-education," he says, "come afterwards by hard work, not casually. If you imagine you can achieve anything, you can do anything without hard work, you are mistaken." Nehru has scorned delight and lived a laborious life. In self-discipline and self-training, which are the very breath of the Goddess of Democracy, Jawaharlal is unsurpassed. After the last Great War, he saw the darkening shadows over Europe with a prophetic vision :—

"Europe in the middle twenties was trying to settle down in a way; the great depression was yet to come but I came back with the conviction that this settling down was superficial only, and big eruptions and mighty changes were in store for Europe and the whole world in the near future. To train and prepare our country for these world events—to keep in readiness for them, as far as we could, seemed to be the immediate task."

### MAN OF ACTION

Jawaharlal is not merely a visionary. He is a first-rate man of action. As a head of Allahabad Municipality, he transformed the subservient board into a truly national body, throbbing with life and pulsating with energy. Doing is the destiny for Nehru. He is always prepared to suffer for others. "Suffering is the mark of the human tribe," says Gandhiji. Jawaharlal Nehru has amply proved it in his character and career. Jean Christopher has very well expressed the sentiments of Jawaharlal :—

*Go, go and never rest,*

*Go on to death,*

*You must die,*



*Go and suffer  
You who must suffer,—  
Suffer, die,  
But be what you must be—  
A man.*

The capitalistic system has outlived its day. It must now give place to saner ordering of human affairs. Capitalism has led to imperialism. It has resulted in recurrent crisis. We live in a state of perpetual slump. The shadow of war darkens the horizon. To-day politics has ceased to have much meaning. The most vital question is equality. That is the lesson which Europe has taught in its agony. We must put out the root of the trouble. The finance-imperialism of the present day is a great danger. The rise of fascism is a very dangerous aspect of economic problems. Europe has been lined up in mutually hostile groups. The rise of Soviet Russia represents a new order. "England proudly laying stress on its democratic constitution at home, acts after the Fascist fashion in India." But the crisis of capitalism is already on. And it has the world by the throat. In this struggle Britain is joining the ranks of reaction. For them democracy means their own domination.

"Truly," says Nehru, "the path of democracy is straight and narrow. Democracy for an eastern country seems to mean only one thing; to carry out the behests of the imperialist ruling power and not to touch any of its interests. Subject to that proviso, democratic freedom can flourish unchecked."

Democracy and Capitalism grew up together in the nineteenth century, but they were not mutually compatible. There was a basic contradiction between them, for democracy laid stress on the power of the many, while capitalism gave power to the few. This ill-assorted pair carried on somehow because political parliamentary democracy was in itself a very limited kind of democracy and did not interfere much with

the growth of the monopoly and power concentration. Even so, as the spirit of democracy grew, the divorce became inevitable, and the time for that has come now. Parliamentary Democracy is in disrepute to-day and as a reaction from it all manner of new solgans fill the air. Because of this, the British Government in India becomes more reactionary still, and makes it an excuse for withholding from us even the outer forms of political freedom."

The new civilization is being built up in the Soviet countries. It attracts in spite of some dark patches. It offers hope and world peace. It gives a prospect of ending exploitation of millions. "Whatever the future may bring," says Nehru, "one thing is certain, that the old order has gone and all the king's horses and all the king's men will not set it up again." This disease is deep-seated. And it requires a radical and revolutionary remedy. "It is worth noting, however, says Nehru, "that the foreign policy of England has been the greatest stumbling block to international co-operation through the League of Nations or otherwise."

There is no room for quibbling, the fate of nations is at stake. The day for palace intrigues passes when the masses enter politics. "Their manners are not those of the drawing room," says Nehru; "we never took the trouble to teach them any manners. Their school is the school of events and suffering is their teacher." This mad modern world breeds war and worry: It crushes millions. The old capitalist order has tottered. The growing forces of labour are a challenge to it. The possessing classes are sinking their petty differences and banding themselves together against the workers. Within the fabric of imperialism there can be no solution. Imperialism will have to go, root and branch. "The sooner this is realized and worked for," says Nehru, "the nearer we shall all be to a solution of the world's difficulties."

Imperialism has perfected itself in the course of time. "The modern type of empire," says Nehru, "is the invisible economic empire." "When slavery was abolished, it was thought that men would be free. Soon it was found that men were still dominated by those who controlled the money-power. From slaves and serfs men became wage-slaves. Freedom for them was still far off. There are politically free countries entirely under the economic thumb of others." The British Empire in India is obvious enough," says Nehru. "Britain has political control over India. Side by side with this visible empire, and as a necessary part of it, Britain has economic control over India. It is quite possible that Britain's visible hold over India might go before long and yet the economic control might remain as an invisible empire."

British imperialism have had its day. The problem of to-morrow is the problem of American Imperialism. "But it may be," says Nehru, "and all indications point to it, that the two will unite together in an endeavour to operate a powerful Anglo-Saxon block to dominate the world." He further says, "The British Government has a special responsibility for the growth of fascism, and thus for bringing war nearer. They tolerated aggression in Manchuria, took part in the betrayal of Abyssinia, and indirectly aided the Fascist rebels in Spain. Their general policy was one of consistently encouraging Fascism and Nazism."

### FIERY-FREEDOM-FIGHTER

And why does Nehru desire independence for India? His standpoint is international rather than national: "The spread of Fascism must be countered both at home and abroad. It can only be checked by encouraging democracy everywhere and placing our reliance on it. As an Indian, I desire passionately the freedom of India and I shall go on working for it. But I feel now more than ever that this is necessary from the wider international viewpoint in order to combat Fascism."

Only a free and democratic India can help democracy elsewhere. A subject India dominated by imperialism will be a burden which ever grows heavier and thus weakens the democratic front."

Striving for national freedom, the people of India have become anti-imperialist. India would willingly throw her weight on the side of Democracy. Only a free country can help freedom. Says Nehru: "If Britain is on the side of Democracy, then its first task is to eliminate Empire from India. That is the sequence of events in Indians' eyes, and to that sequence the people of India will adhere. We can never be a party to supporting imperialism. The issues are clear, so are we in our minds." India wants neither Fascism nor imperialism. Both are akin dangers to humanity. Says Nehru:—

"If I were an Englishman, I would not trust the present government in war or peace, and I would not like to commit myself to their care to be used and exploited as they wish. Their talk of peace and democracy has been pure bluff. They could have ensured peace by co-operating with France, the Soviet Union, and the United States of America; and as for democracy, they have done their utmost to slay it in Central Europe. I would demand that this government must go. So long as it remains I would fear betrayal."

India is a major problem of the world. It is a classical country of imperialist domination. The whole structure of British imperialism rests on it. It has also lured other powers on to the paths of imperialist adventure. India to-day is a part of the world movement. "And if India has a message to give to the world, as I hope she has," says Nehru, "she has also to receive and learn much from the messages of other peoples."

Thus Pandit Nehru is an international-minded democrat. He thinks of India in terms of the world and the world in terms of India.

## CHAPTER I

**The Family Follows Fortune**

From scholarliness to statesmanship is no easy transition that marks the fame and fortune of the Nehru family. Raj Kaul, the brilliant ancestor of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, was as much away from the field of statesmanship as Shakespeare from the arena of British politics. Raj Kaul had acquired reputation as a Sanskrit and Persian scholar in Kashmir. His scholarship attracted the royal eye and opened a new playground of activities for the descendants of the family. These were the uncertain days of Farrukhsiar, the then Emperor of Delhi, who picked up the scholar during a visit to Kashmir and made necessary arrangements for the migration of the family to Delhi. He was granted an estate with a house situated on the banks of a *nahar* (canal), from which came the family-name—Nehrus.

The Nehru family suffered many ups and downs during the ups and down of the Moghal decline. The estate dwindled during the unsettled times. At last it vanished away. The young members of the family were thrown upon their wits in the political whirlpool of the times. Lakshmi Narayan Nehru, the great grandfather of Jawaharlal, was the first member of the family who had had a real schooling in the politics of the time, because he was the first pleader of the "Sarkar Company" at the shadow court of the Emperor of Delhi. Ganga Dhar Nehru, Jawaharlal's grandfather, was the first Nehru to have practical training in administration, because he was the Sheriff of Delhi for sometime before the Revolution of 1857. Young Nehrus were already picking up English, and it stood them in good stead during the tumultuous

days of 1857 :—

“The Revolt of 1857 put an end to our family’s connection with Delhi, and all our family papers and documents were destroyed in the course of it. The family, having lost nearly all it possessed, joined the numerous fugitives, who were leaving the old imperial city and went to Agra. My father was not born then, but my two uncles were already young men and possessed some knowledge of English. This knowledge saved the younger of the two uncles, as well as some other members of the family, from a sudden and ignominious death. He was journeying from Delhi with some family members among whom was his younger sister, a little girl who was very fair, as some Kashmiri children are. Some English soldiers met them on the way and they suspected this little aunt of mine to be an English girl and accused my uncle of kidnapping her. From an accusation to summary justice and punishment was usually a matter of minutes in those days, and my uncle and others of the family might well have found themselves hanging on the nearest tree. Fortunately, for them, my uncle’s knowledge of English delayed matters a little and then some one who knew him passed that way and rescued him and the others.” (Jawaharlal’s *Autobiography*, p. 2).

Thus the young Nehrus used English at an early date to protect themselves from the lawlessness of the English soldiers. They very well understood the value of a foreign language in order to tackle the foreigners. That is essentially the characteristic of statesmanship. No wonder, the Nehrus promptly climbed the political ladder under the British administrators. Bansi Dhar Nehru, the uncle of Jawaharlal entered the Judicial Department of the British Government. Nand Lal Nehru, the younger uncle, became the Diwan of Khetri State—a position of great political importance. Later on he became

one of the leaders of the High Court Bar at Allahabad, and gradually developed an extensive practice.

Pandit Motilal Nehru, the respected father of Jawaharlal, was very far from being a model boy under the guardianship of his brother. His school and college career was chiefly notable for his numerous pranks and escapades. He took more interest in novel adventures than in study. He was looked upon as one of the leaders of the rowdy element in the college. "He was attracted to western dress and other western ways at a time when it was uncommon for Indians to take to them except in big cities like Calcutta and Bombay." No wonder, his English professors were fond of the naughty little knave. Though he was a little wild in his behaviour, they got him out of a scrape. He was too naughty to get his degree, but he topped the list in the High Court Vakils Examination and got a gold medal for it. "He had found the subject after his own heart," says Jawaharlal "or rather he was intent on success in the profession of his choice."

Motilal was keen on getting on in life. He soon rooted himself in the profession of law. He was also fond of wrestling and patronized the wrestling matches. Besides this recreation he plunged himself into the work, bent on success. At an early age he established himself as a successful lawyer. Even his holidays were devoted to his legal practice. He loved a fight, a struggle against heavy odds, but he would not like to play a second fiddle. The aggressive spirit of his childhood was not curbed. He avoided the political field, because there was little of fight then in the political ideology of the Indian National Congress. Says Jawaharlal :

"He was, of course, a nationalist in a vague sense of the word, but he admired Englishmen and their ways. He had a feeling that his own countrymen had fallen low and almost deserved what they had got. And there was just a trace

of contempt in his mind for the politicians who talked and talked without doing anything, though he had no idea at all as to what else they could do. Also there was the thought born in the pride of his own success, that many—certainly not all—of those who took to politics had been failures in life.”

So Motilal devoted his time to law alone until his son came upon the scene. He took a firm grip of the ladder of success and rung by rung he mounted higher. But Law and Fight are the two handmaids of statesmanship. And Motilal had both of them in him. Although he stood by and watched, he was already girding up his loins for the battle ahead.

Thus Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, son of an astute lawyer, born on November 14, 1889, was brought up in the cradle of statesmanship. Being the child of success, his childhood was sheltered and uneventful. He listened to the talk of his grown-up cousins. “Often this talk,” he says, “related to the overbearing character and insulting manners of the English people, as well as Eurasians, towards Indians, and how it was the duty of every Indian to stand up to this and not to tolerate it.” So the babe was already formulating principles of defence and attack against John Bull.

Instances of conflict between the rulers and the ruled were common. These were fully discussed in the presence of Little Nehru. “It was a notorious fact,” he writes, “that whenever an Englishman killed an Indian, he was acquitted by a jury of his own countrymen.” Compartments were reserved for Europeans in railway trains. No Indian was allowed to travel therein however crowded the train may be, even though those compartments may be empty. The trains used to be terribly packed in those days. Even an unreserved compartment would be taken possession of by an Englishman. And he would not allow any Indian to enter it. Benches were reserved for Europeans in public parks. “I was filled with resent-



ment," says Jawaharlal, "against the alien rulers of my country who misbehaved in this manner, and whenever an Indian hit back I was glad." Not infrequently one of his own cousins got involved in these encounters. Then they all got very excited over it. "One of the cousins," he says, "was the strong man of the family and he loved to pick a quarrel with an Englishman, or more frequently with Eurasians, who perhaps to show off their oneness with the ruling race, were often even more offensive than the English official or merchant."

Although Jawaharlal in his childhood resented the presence of the English rulers, he did not nurse any grudge against individual Englishmen. He had had English governesses and often chatted with the English friends of his father. In his heart he rather admired the English.

## CHAPTER II

## The Boy Patriot

The drawing-room of Pandit Motilal Nehru resounded with tremendous laughter. It was a favourite haunt of the elite in Allahabad. In the evenings many friends came to visit him. He relaxed after the tension of the day. Little Nehru would peep at his father and his friends from behind a curtain. He was trying to make out what these "great big people" said to one other. If he was caught eaves-dropping, he was dragged out of his hiding. His punishment was to sit for a while on his father's knee.

The earliest political confidant of Little Nehru was a Muslim. He was a clerk of his father. His name was Munshi Mubarak Ali. The Revolt of 1857 had ruined his well-to-do family. The English troops had partly exterminated it. This affliction had made him gentle. He had forbearance with everybody. For Little Nehru he was a sure haven of refuge.

Whenever the boy was in trouble, he went to his confidant. With his fine grey beard he seemed very ancient to young eyes. The little boy used to snuggle up to him. Little Nehru listened wide-eyed to the accounts of the happenings in the Revolt of 1857.

While Little Nehru showed an abiding interest in stories of action and revolutionary changes, he had, unlike other Indian children little love for religion. The communist was already in the making within him. Thus he writes about his atheism :—

"Of religion I had very hazy notions. It seemed to me a woman's affair. Father and my elder cousin treated the question humorously and refused to take it seriously. The

women of the family indulged in various ceremonies and *pujas* from time to time and I rather enjoyed them, though I tried to imitate to some extent the casual attitude of the grown-up men of the family. Sometimes I accompanied my mother or aunt to the Ganges for a dip, sometimes we visited temples in Allahabad itself or in Benares or elsewhere, or went to see a *sanyasi* reputed to be very holy. But all this left little impression on my mind. ”

While the boy was still practising the art of swimming in the swimming pool in the big house with the big garden, Anand Bhawan, which his father had recently built, there came the news of the Boer War. This interested Little Nehru. His sympathies were all with the Boers. He began to read the newspapers to get the news of fighting. This sympathy with the down-trodden, which Nehru acquired so early, has been the golden thread of his statesmanship. It was no doubt this international sympathy which carried the boy in his manhood to watch the heroic fronts in Spain and China against the overwhelming tides of fascist aggression.

The next important event which affected Little Nehru was the Russo-Japanese War. Japanese activities stirred up his enthusiasm. He waited eagerly for the fresh news daily. He drank deeply into the newspapers. He invested in a large number of books on Japan. He tried to read some of them. He felt rather lost in Japanese history. He liked the knightly tales of old Japan. He admired the pleasant prose of Lafcadio Hearn. “Nationalistic ideas,” says Nehru, “filled my mind. I mused of Indian freedom and Asiatic freedom from the thralldom of Europe. I dreamed of brave deeds, of how, sword in hand, I would, fight for India and help in freeing her.”

In May 1905, when Jawaharlal was fifteen, he set sail for England. The entire family accompanied the promising lad. He read in the train from Dover of the great Japanese sea victory at

Tsushima. No wonder, the boy-statesman was in high good humour. The first person he met in London was Dr. M. A. Ansari. Young Nehru describes him as "a smart and clever young man." Dr. Ansari had a record of brilliant academical achievement behind him. He was then a house-surgeon in a London hospital. Jawaharlal was lucky in finding a vacancy at Harrow. His parents went to the Continent and after some months they returned to India. The young boy was left alone among the strangers. He felt lonely and homesick. Nevertheless, he managed to fit in to some extent in the life of school. "I was never an exact fit," he says, "Always I had a feeling that I was not one of them, and the others must have felt the same way about me. I was left a little to myself." In general knowledge he was in advance of those of his age. His interests were certainly wider. He read both books and newspapers more than most of his fellow-students. "I remember," he says, "writing to my father how dull most of the English boys were as they could talk about nothing but their games." Most of the books that he read were political in nature. And newspapers he read were, of course, always predominantly political. Thus Young Nehru was laying the foundations of sound statesmanship at Harrow. By brushing his shoulders with English boys he was learning to tackle the would-be English diplomats.

Jawaharlal was greatly interested in the General Election. It took place at the end of 1905 and ended in a great Liberal victory. "Early in 1906," says he, "our form master asked us about the new Government and, much to his surprise, I was the only boy in his form who could give him much information on the subject, including almost a complete list of members of Campbell-Bannerman's Cabinet." Another subject which fascinated the boy was the early growth of aviation. These were the days of the Wright Brothers. He wrote to his father in his enthusiasm that soon he might be able to pay him a week-end

visit in India by air. The history of the two wars has shown how intimate is the relation between aviation and international politics, and how justified was Young Nehru in extending his boyish patronage to both.

Jawaharlal had Paramjit Singh, the eldest son of the Maharaja of Kapurthala, for a companion at Harrow. He was a complete misfit and was unhappy. With his princely ways, he would not mix at all with other boys. They often made fun of him. "This irritated him greatly," says Young Nehru, "and sometimes he used to tell them what he would do to them if they come to Kapurthala." Needless to say, this did not improve matters for him. False princely pride has always been a stumbling block to statesmanship.

Right through the years 1906 and 1907, Young Nehru was interested in the political affairs of his country. News from India agitated him. From English papers he got accounts meagre enough. Even that little information showed that big events were happening at home. Bengal, the Punjab, and Maharashtra were astir with political activity. There were deportations of Lala Lajpat Rai and Sardar Ajit Singh. Bengal seemed to be in an uproar. Tilak's name was flashed from Poona. There was Swadeshi and boycott. "All this stirred tremendously," says Jawaharlal; "but there was not a soul Harrow to whom I could talk about it."

The Boy Patriot was profoundly interested in the life of Garibaldi. He studied the whole Garibaldi story with a feeling of fascination. Visions of similar deeds in India came before him. He looked for a gallant fight for freedom. India and Italy got strangely mixed together. But Harrow seemed a small and restricted place for these ideas. He wanted to go to the wider sphere of University. So he went to Trinity College, Cambridge. He got out of the shackles of boyhood. He could now claim to be a grown-up. He felt elated at being an undergraduate with a large tether of freedom. Although

he took up Science, he did not give up the thread of political pursuits :—

“ I took the Natural Sciences Tripos, my subjects being Chemistry, Geology and Botany, but my interests were not confined to these. Many of the people I met at Cambridge or during the vacations in London or elsewhere talked learnedly about books and Literature and History and Politics and Economics. I felt a little at sea at first in this semi-highbrow talk, but I read a few books and soon got the hang of it and could at least keep my end up and not betray too great an ignorance on any of the usual subjects. ”

Indian politics was in a state of upheaval. He wanted to play a brave part in it. The political struggle in India was the only thing that disturbed his mind. Among the books that influenced him politically at Cambridge was Meredith Townsend's *Asia and Europe*.

India was seething with unrest and trouble. Bold nationalists were showing fight. They could not submit tamely to the foreign rule. The activities of Tilak and Aurobindo Ghose thrilled his soul. By conviction he was Tilaky or Extremist. Although he did not indulge in public-speaking, he was a very well-informed chap and his mind was bubbling with political sentiments. Edwin Montagu, the would-be Secretary of State for India, often visited the College Debating Club, “ The Magpie and Stump. ” There it was a rule that a member not speaking for a whole term had to pay a fine. Jawaharlal often paid the fine ! In the *Majlis* the Indian students often used the most extreme language while discussing Indian politics. They admired the terrorist movement in Bengal. “ Later, ” writes Jawaharlal, “ I was to find that these very persons were to become members of the Indian Civil Service, High Court Judges, very staid and sober lawyers, and the like. Few of these parlour firebrands took any effective part in Indian political movements subsequently. ”



him. He was vaguely attracted to the Fabians and socialistic ideas. He was interested in the political movements of the day.

Having been called to the Bar, Jawaharlal returned to India in the autumn of 1912. At that time India was politically very dull. Tilak was in gaol. The Extremists were lying low without any effective leadership. Bengal was quiet after the unsettling of the partition. The Moderates had been effectively "rallied" to the Minto-Morley scheme of councils. There was some interest in Indians overseas. South Africa was raising its head as a cobra of gloominess. The Congress was a moderate group. It met annually. It passed feeble resolutions. It attracted little attention.

Jawaharlal visited the Bankipore Congress as a delegate in the Christmas of 1912. It was very much an English-speaking upper class affair. Morning coats and well-pressed trousers were greatly in evidence. Essentially it was a social gathering. There was little excitement. Gokhale was the only outstanding person of the session. He was high-strung. He was full of earnestness and nervous energy. He took politics and public affairs seriously and felt deeply about them. Jawaharlal was deeply impressed by Gokhale. He might well have sang :

" I live for those who love me,  
For those who know me, true,  
For the Heaven that bends above me,  
And the good that I can do ;  
For the wrongs that need resistance.  
For the cause that lacks assistance.  
And the good that I can do."

—*The Divine Mother.*



## CHAPTER III

### The Promising Politician

Law did not fill Young Nehru with a whole-hearted enthusiasm. Politics of that time offered no scope for "aggressive-nationalist activity" which he had cherished in England. He joined the Congress and took part in its occasional deliberations, but it was a lukewarm affair. Jawaharlal threw himself with energy into the agitation against the Fiji indenture system for Indian workers and the South African question. But those were temporary occupations.

He was attracted in those days towards the Servants of India Society under the brilliant leadership of Gokhale. But he never thought of joining it because its political activity was too moderate for Young Nehru. Nevertheless, he had a great admiration for the members of the society. They had devoted themselves for a mere pittance to the welfare of the country. "Here at least I thought," he says, "was straight and single-minded and continuous work, even though it might not be wholly on right lines."

Mr. Srinivas Sastri, however, gave Young Nehru a great shock. He told the students at Allahabad "to observe carefully all the rules and regulations laid down by constituted authority." All this goody-goody talk did not appeal to Nehru. Mr. Sastri called upon the boys to report each other's sins and slips immediately to the authorities. In other words they were to spy on one another. India was overcast with a semi-official atmosphere those days. Jawaharlal listened aghast to this friendly counsel of the great leader. "I had freshly returned from England," says he, "and the lesson that had been most impressed upon my mind in school and college was never to betray a colleague." This is a great principle of statesmanship which Young Nehru learned from his school-fellows at Harrow.

There is no greater sin against the canons of good form than to sneak and get a companion into trouble. No wonder, Sastri upset Nehru.

Then there came the World War Number One. The Defence of India Act held the country in its grip. Politics petered out and sank into insignificance. Then there came the news of shootings. Press-gang methods were used to enrol recruits in the Punjab. "There was little sympathy with the British in spite of loud professions of loyalty," says Nehru. "Moderates and Extremists alike learnt with satisfaction of German victories." There was no love for Germany either. It was only the desire to see our own rulers humbled. It was a helpless man's idea of vicarious revenge. Of all the nations involved Nehru's sympathies were most with France. Only an unabashed propaganda had some inkling of an effect on the masses.

As Lokamanya Tilak came out of prison, political life gradually grew again. Two Home Rule Leagues were launched forth—one by Mr. Tilak, the other by Mrs. Besant. With foresighted statesmanship, Young Nehru joined the both! But he worked especially for Besant's league. She was playing an ever-increasing part in the political field of India. The Congress became a little more exciting body. The Muslim League began to march with the Congress. The atmosphere became electric. Big things were expected in the womb of time. The internment of Mrs. Besant added greatly to the pitch of excitement. It stirred even the dying generation of moderates. Even Mr. Srinivasa Sastri blossomed forth into eloquence. A comparison with Sastri's statesmanship brings out Nehru's own :—

"But just before or after the internment suddenly Mr. Sastri became silent. He failed us completely when the time for action came and there was considerable disappointment and resentment at his silence when most of all a lead

I am afraid that ever since then the conviction has grown upon me that Mr. Sastri is not a man of action and a crisis does not suit his genius."

It was the time for Young Nehru to act. The Government was organising a new defence force. It was known as the Indian Defence Force on the lines of the European defence forces in India. It was just like the Civic Guards of World War Number Two, and drew its recruits from the middle classes. The Indians were treated very differently from Europeans. So Jawaharlal and his co-workers felt that they should not co-operate with the Government. After much discussion it was decided to co-operate. It was considered worth while for our young men to have military training. Jawaharlal sent in his application to join the new force. A committee was formed in Allahabad to push the scheme on. Just then came Mrs. Besant's internment. "In the excitement of the moment, says Young Nehru, "I managed to get the committee members—they included my father, Dr. Tej Bahadur Sapru, Mr. C.Y. Chintamani and other moderate leaders—to agree to cancel our meeting and all other work in connection with the Defence Force as a protest against the Government's action."

The public activities of Jawaharlal in the early years of war were modest. He kept away from addressing public gatherings. He was still diffident of public speaking. Besides he doubted his capacity to speak at any length in Hindustani. At last he was induced to deliver his maiden speech in 1915 at Allahabad. It was a protest meeting against a new act muzzling the press. Nehru spoke briefly and in English. "As soon as the meeting was over," says Nehru, "Dr. Tej Bahadur Sapru, to my great embarrassment, embraced and kissed me in public on the dais." Thus the Boy Patriot conquered his stumbling block to a public career and opened the way for his practical statesmanship.

Dr. Sapru was still the flower of hope for Young India. They expected that he might take up a more advanced attitude in politics. He was emotional and off and on carried away by his enthusiasm. "Compared to him," says Nehru, "my father seemed cold-bloodedness itself, though underneath this outer covering there was fire enough." Young folk pinned their hopes on Dr. Tej and Madan Mohan Malaviya, but the subsequent history of India has frozen both of these roseate personalities, while Motilal Nehru glowed forth like an eternal flame.

Political question produced a tense atmosphere in the house of Young Nehru. His father had been closely watching his growing drift towards Extremism. He imagined that his son was heading straight for the Terrorist Movement of Bengal. This worried him very much. Jawaharlal describes his own attitude as follows :—

"As a matter of fact I was not attracted that way, but the idea, that we must not tamely submit to existing conditions and that something must be done, began to obsess me more and more. Successful action, from the national point of view, did not seem to be at all easy, but I felt that both individual and national honour demanded a more aggressive and fighting attitude to foreign rule."

This is an important principle of Nehru's political philosophy. His whole statesmanship and successful leadership hovers round this point. Nehru represents the youthful spirits of restlessness and 'aggression' of democratic type in nationalism. He is the Prometheus of Indian politics. With Jawaharlal, as with his father, each step forward means a hard and bitter struggle within himself. With Jawaharlal, quite unlike his father, everything is decided in the twinkling of an eye. Quite unlike Mahatma Gandhi, as John Gunther says, Jawaharlal defines his views carefully. There is no haziness about Young Nehru. And when he takes a step after the struggle within himself, there is no going back. Notwithstand-

ing his overflowing zest and zeal, Jawaharlal does not do anything in a fit of enthusiasm. While Mahatma Gandhi obeys the inner voice, Jawaharlal's action is a result of intellectual conviction.

The first meeting of Young Nehru with Gandhiji was about the time of Lucknow Congress during Christmas 1916. The boy admired the *guru* because of his heroic fight in South Africa. "He seemed very distant and different," says the admirer, "and unpolitical to many of us young men." But his victory on behalf of the tenants in Champaran provided food for thought. "We saw," says Jawaharlal, "that he was prepared to apply his methods in India also and promised success." Thus Jawaharlal, with his clear-sighted statesmanship was the first young nationalist who understood Gandhiji and comprehended the value of his moral weapon in the service of his country.

Another person who moved Jawaharlal was the nightingale of India—Sarojini Naidu. The eloquence of her speeches in Allahabad won him. "It was all nationalism and patriotism", says Nehru, "and I was a pure nationalist." His vague socialist ideas of college days had sunk into the background. Roger Casement's wonderful speech at his trial in 1916 converted him from socialism. It pointed out exactly how a member of a subject nation should feel. "The Easter Week rising in Ireland by its very failure attracted," says Nehru, "for was that not true courage which mocked at almost certain failure and proclaimed to the world that no physical might could crush the invincible spirit of a nation?" Such were his thoughts then. Fresh reading was again stirring the embers of socialistic ideas in his head. These were vague ideas. His favourite writer was Bertrand Russell.

Early in the spring of 1916, Young Nehru was married in the city of Delhi. He spent the honeymoon in Kashmir. He made a trip to Ladakh Road. From the top of the Zoji-la Pass

he saw the rich verdant mountain sides. The little glaciers crept down to meet him. He made many touring plans but he has not been able to return ever since. On the other hand, he got enatngled more and more in the coils of public affairs. "Instead of going up mountains or crossing the seas," says Nehru, "I have to satisfy my wanderlust by coming to prison."

Jawaharlal came in closer contact with Gandhiji during the stormy days of Rowlatt Act and the Amristar firing. The Act provided for the arrest of people without trial. It was an excellent instrument of terrorism. "One might almost think," says Nehru, "that the object of the measure was to bring trouble." During the Punjab inquiry Young Nehru saw a great deal of Gandhiji. Very often his proposals seemed novel to the committee. And it did not approve of them. But Mahatma Gandhi always argued his way to their acceptance. Subsequent events showed the wisdom of his advice. "Faith in his political insight grew in me," says Jawaharlal. The Amritsar Congress during Christmas 1919 was presided over by the father of Young Nehru. Thus he writes :

"The Amritsar Congress was the first Gandhi Congress. Lokamanya Tilak was also present and took a prominent part in the deliberations, but there could be no doubt about it that the majority of the delegates and even more so the great crowds outside, looked to Gandhiji for leadership. The slogan *Mahatma Gandhi ki jai* began to dominate the Indian political horizon."

During the Khilafat Movement which followed, Young Nehru became a staunch follower of Gandhiji. The latter spoke well in his best dictatorial tone. He was humble, but also clear-cut and hard as a diamond. He was pleasant and soft-spoken, but inflexible and terribly earnest. His eyes were mild and deep. Yet out of them blazed out a fierce energy and determination. These are the qualities which Jawaharlal

admired in a great statesman and tried to cultivate them in his own personality. And successfully has he cultivated them.

In 1920 Jawaharlal was attracted from his easy-going round of life by the grievances of peasants in U. P. He toured the villages and heard their tales of woe. A touch with the common salt of the earth brought tears into his eyes and helped to formulate his national policy on the lines of true statesmanship. These peasants took away his shyness from him. They taught him to speak in public. Till then he could hardly speak in Hindustani from the platform. "But I could not possibly avoid addressing these peasant gatherings," says Nehru, "and how could I be shy of these poor unsophisticated people?" Jawaharlal did not know the art of oratory. So he spoke to them, man to man. He told them what he had in his mind and in his heart. He stuck to his intimate conversational method of speaking. And thus he laid the foundations of a brilliant leadership excelled only by Gandhiji whose devoted disciple he is.

For two years (1920-21) Jawaharlal devoted most of his time to the villages. He watched the agrarian movement grow in strength. The down-trodden *kisan* began to gain a new confidence in himself. He walked straight with head p. His fear of the landlord lessened. If the landlord ejected tenant, all the tenants boycotted the landlord. The latter were frightened and were on the defensive. They ceased to be the "natural leaders of the people," as they once claimed themselves to be. No wonder, Jawaharlal was getting useful practical training in the political laboratory of peasantry. He was charmed by the powerful weapon of non-violent non-co-operation :—

"What I admired was the moral and ethical side of our movement and of Satyagraha. I did not give an absolute allegiance to the doctrine of non-violence or accept it for ever,

but it attracted me more, and more, and the belief grew upon me that, situated as we were in India and with our background and traditions, it was the right policy for us. The spiritualization of politics, using the word not in its narrow religious sense, seemed to me a fine idea. A worthy end should have worthy means leading up to it. That seemed not only a good ethical doctrine but sound practical politics, for the means that are not good often deflect the end in view and raise new problems and difficulties."

This is a correct estimate of the movement of Satyagraha. Therefore, Jawaharlal's devotion to Gandhiji is not based on blind belief. He has grasped the truth as firmly as the prophet himself. Nehru's conviction in non-violence is based on cold intellectual logic. And that is the sterling note of correct statesmanship, because it is not led away by national enthusiasm.

Non-violence filled the masses with confidence. There was an extraordinary stiffening-up in 1921. Broken-down people suddenly straightened their backs. They lifted their heads. They took part in a joint countrywide action. "Non-violence was the moral equivalent of war and of all violent struggle," says Nehru. "It was not merely an ethical alternative, but it was effective also."

Jawaharlal did not agree with Mahatma Gandhi's ideas about machinery and modern civilization. He looked upon them as utopian and as largely inapplicable to modern conditions. He was not prepared to reject the achievements of civilization. He felt, however, that some variation to suit Indian conditions was possible. "Personally," he says, "I have always felt attracted towards big machinery and fast travelling." Thus Jawaharlal is essentially a statesman of the European type. He believes in expansionism and conquest of nature as well as democracy and political independence.



There is no spiritual narrowness about him, such as hovers around the Himalayan stature of Mahatma Gandhi.

Yet Young Nehru, like Gandhiji, took to the crowd and the crowd took to him. He became wholly absorbed and wrapt in the movement. He gave up all associations with friends and family. He lived in offices and committee meetings and crowds. "Go to the villages" was the slogan. He trudged many a mile across the fields. He experienced the thrill of mass-feeling. He felt the magnetic power of influencing the masses. He began to understand a little the psychology of the crowd. He found the gulf of difference between the city masses and the peasantry. He felt at home in the dust and discomfort. He liked the pushing and jostling of large crowds. It was only "the want of discipline" that irritated him. Jawaharlal adores discipline and has something of a young commander in him. Mahatma Gandhi also believes in discipline, but his is the moral discipline only. Jawaharlal inculcates not only moral discipline but also a relentless physical discipline such as we find in a military camp. No wonder, he was deeply inspired by the red fronts in Spain and China.

Like Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal has also learnt to handle the crowds during the stormy days of stayagraha:—

"Since those days I sometimes had to face hostile and angry crowds, worked up to a state when a spark would light a flame, and I found that that early experience and the confidence it beget in me stood me in good stead. Always I went straight to the crowd and trusted it, and so far I have always had courtesy and appreciation from it, even though there was no agreement. But crowds are fickle, and the future may have different experiences in store for me."

Jawaharlal, unlike Gandhiji, has never lost himself in the crowd. Always he felt apart from it. From his separate mental perch he looked at it critically. Always he tried to be frank and straightforward to them. He even spoke harshly to

them. He criticized many of their pet beliefs and customs. "And still they put up with me," he says. He felt that the affection of the crowd was not for him, but for a fanciful image of him.

Jawaharlal, as a statesman, is as critically severe about himself as he is about the crowd :—

"It is not easy to behave naturally on a platform before a large audience, and few of us had previous experience of such publicity. So we tried to look as we imagined, leader should look, thoughtful and serious, with no trace of levity or frivolity. When we walked or talked or smiled we were conscious of thousand of eyes staring at us, and we reacted accordingly. Our speeches were often very eloquent but, equally often, singularly pointless. It is difficult to see oneself as others see one. And so, unable to criticize myself, I took to watching carefully the ways of others, and I found considerable amusement in this occupation. And then the terrible thought would strike me that I might perhaps appear equally ludicrous to others."

Thus Jawaharlal is a self-conscious statesman. He does not drown his thoughts in vanity or wine like the diplomats of continental capitals.

Arrests followed close upon the speeches. The end of the year 1921 brought matters to a head. The Prince of Wales was coming to India. The Congress had proclaimed a boycott. Jawaharlal was working hard to execute the Congress policy. No wonder, the warrants were issued both for the son and the father. But the arrest of Congress leader did not put a full stop to Congress activities. Wherever the Prince of Wales went, he met with deserted streets. There was an orgy of arrests and convictions. Thirty thousand prisoners went behind the bars voluntarily.

Mahatma Gandhi was not arrested. He was still out, issuing messages from day to day. His directions inspired

the people and kept them in discipline. The Government did not check him, because they feared its reactions on the police. Early in February 1922, the whole scene shifted. Gandhiji stopped the aggressive aspects of the struggle. He suspended civil resistance. This was because of what happened near the village of Chauri Chaura. A mob of villagers had set on fire a police station and half a dozen policemen. Mahatma Gandhi declared that the country was not prepared for civil disobedience and he called off the movement at a time the Government was shaking with the peaceful revolution. No wonder, Jawaharlal, a practical statesman, did not agree with Gandhiji's command, overridden by moral considerations :—

“ We were angry when we learnt of this stoppage of our struggle at a time when we seemed to be consolidating our position and advancing on all fronts. But our disappointment and anger in prison could do little good to any one, and civil disobedience stopped and non-co-operation withered away.”

The later events proved the correctness of Nehru's views. After many months of strain and anxiety the Government breathed again. For the officials, Chauri Chaura was a blessing in disguise. For the first time they had the opportunity of taking the initiative. A few weeks later they arrested Gandhi, whom they had not touched when the storm was blowing. It is ironical that the British authorities arrested the very man who had stopped the political storm. And what is even more ironical they sentenced their benefactor to a long term of imprisonment. How correct was Nehru !

Everybody was bitterly critical of Mahatma Gandhi. Jawaharlal's father was much upset by Gandhiji's move. The younger people were naturally even more agitated. Their mounting hopes tumbled to the ground. This mental reaction was natural. Here is an argument typical of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru :

"What troubled us even more were the reasons given for this suspension and the consequences that seemed to flow from them. Chauri Chaura may have been and was a deplorable occurrence and wholly opposed to the spirit of the non-violent movement ; but were a remote village and a mob of excited peasants in an out-of-the-way place going to put an end, for sometime at least, to our national struggle for freedom ? If this was the inevitable consequence of a sporadic act of violence then surely there was something lacking in the philosophy and technique of a non-violent struggle. For it seemed to us to be impossible to guarantee against the occurrence of some such untoward incidents. Must we train the three hundred and odd millions of India in the theory and practice of non-violent action before we could go forward ? And, even so, how many of us could say that under extreme provocations from the police we would be able to remain perfectly peaceful ? But even *provocateurs*, stool pigeons and the like who crept into our movement, indulged in violence themselves or induced others to do so. If this was the sole condition of its function then the non-violent methods of resistance would always fail."

Jawaharlal Nehru has not accepted non-violence as an unchallengeable creed. It is only a policy of national action. And it must be judged by its consequence. "Individuals," says Nehru, "might make of it a religion or incontrovertible creed. But no political organisation, so long as it remained political, could do so." That is the most fundamental principle of constructive statesmanship which unluckily has not as yet dawned upon Gandhiji.

Jawaharlal was released and re-arrested for having taken part in the boycott of foreign cloth. It was a hectic period for the political prisoners as well as the jail staff. The average Congress prisoner was not very meek and mild. The general policy, however, was one of co-operation with the jail authorities. The prisoners had come of their own accord.

Many indeed had pushed their way in uninvited. There was hardly any question of any one of them trying to escape. Any attempt to escape would only bring a measure of ignominy. It was tantamount to a withdrawal from the political activity of the civil resistance variety. "The superintendent of our prison in Lucknow," says Nehru, "fully appreciated this and used to tell the gaoler (who was a Khan Sahib) that if he could succeed in allowing some of the Congress prisoners to escape, he, the superintendent, would recommend him to the Government for the title of Khan Bahadur."

Coming out of the prison, Jawaharlal noticed many changes in the country. His faith in Gandhiji's leadership remained, but he began to examine some parts of his programme more critically. But Gandhiji was in prison and beyond his reach. Therefore, his advice could not be taken. Neither the "Changers" (party in favour of council-entry) nor the "No-Changers" attracted him. The former were veering towards reformism and constitutionalism. These seemed to Nehru to lead to a blind alley. The No-changers were supposed to be the ardent followers of the Mahatma. Like most of the disciples they prized the letter more than the spirit. There was nothing dynamic about them. In practice most of them were pious and inoffensive. But they had one advantage. They kept in touch with the peasant masses. Motilal Nehru headed the Swarajist Party, but he left his son quite free to follow his own instinct.

Like all other selfless statesmen, Jawaharlal is strongly of the opinion that there should be some system of payment for whole-time workers. If they do not ask for money, it does not mean that they should be deprived of the most vital necessities of everyday life. Thus he argues the point in a most rational way :

"A suggestion was made in the 1924 Congress that the General Secretaries should be paid. I happened to be one

of the Secretaries then, and I welcomed the proposal. It seemed to me quite wrong to expect whole-time work from any one without paying him a maintenance allowance at least. Otherwise some person with private means has to be chosen, and such gentlemen of leisure are not perhaps always politically desirable, nor can they be held responsible for the work. The Congress would not have paid much; our rates of payment were low enough. But there is in India an extraordinary and thoroughly unjustified prejudice against receiving salaries from public funds (though not from the State) and my father strongly objected to my doing so. My co-secretary, who was himself in great need of money, also considered it below his dignity to accept it from the Congress. And so, I, who had no dignity in the matter and was perfectly prepared to accept a salary, had to do without it."

Whatever the public prejudice may be to the contrary, the reader, I hope, will endorse the views of Pandit Nehru. Some type of financial security is essential for a regular whole-time worker.

During a visit to Nabha in order to watch a Sikh civil disobedience campaign, Jawaharlal was arrested and committed to the police lock-up. There he had had an opportunity of studying the administration of a typical Indian State. He had two companions and they were handcuffed like criminals. "This march of ours," says Nehru, "down the streets of Jaito town reminded me forcibly of a dog being led by a chain." They were "kept in a most unwholesome and insanitary cell." Rats played over their faces at night. The Magistrate was entirely illiterate. It was a sham-show of a trial. Semi-feudal conditions prevailed there. Jawaharlal in his remarkable way sums up the influence of British authority over Indian States :—

"The semi-feudal conditions are retained, autocracy is kept, the old laws and procedure are still supposed to function,

all the restrictions on personal liberty and association and expression of opinion (and these are all-embracing) continue, but one change is made which alters the whole background. The executive becomes stronger and a measure of efficiency is introduced, and this leads to a tightening-up of all the feudal and autocratic bonds. In course of time the British administration would no doubt change some of the archaic customs and methods, for they come in the way of efficient government as well as commercial penetration. But to begin with, they take full advantage of them to tighten their hold on the people who have now to put up not only with feudalism and autocracy but with an efficient enforcement of them by a strong executive."

Jawaharlal saw something of this in Nabha. The State was under a British Administrator. He was a member of I.C.S. and had the full powers of an autocrat. He was subject only to the Government of India. And yet at every turn Jawaharlal was referred to Nabha laws and procedure to justify the denial of the most ordinary rights. "We had to face," says Pandit Nehru, "a combination of feudalism and the modern bureaucratic machine with the disadvantages of both and the advantages of neither." Ever since Pandit Nehru has taken an increasing interest in the organisation of the State Peoples' Congress. And due to his ceaseless efforts, the masses of the states are coming into their own and demanding full independence.

When Maulana Mohammad Ali became the President of the Congress in 1923, he made Pandit Nehru the Congress Secretary. One was all for religion, the other all against it. The Almighty God was a frequent subject of argument between them. Thus he writes :—

"Mohammad Ali had an extraordinary way of bringing in some reference to God even in Congress resolutions, either by way of expressing gratitude or some kind of prayers. I used

to protest, and then he would shout at me for my irreligion. And yet, curiously enough, he would tell me later that he was quite sure that I was fundamentally religious, in spite of my superficial behaviour or my declarations to the contrary."

That is quite true. Jawaharlal is so humane a statesman, all pity for the poor, that he encroaches upon the very holiness of Mahatma Gandhi. He is among Creator's truest gentlemen. Jawaharlal is just like Abu Ben Adham. His name is not in the golden book of those who love God, but his name tops the list of those whom God loves. While denying religion by the tongue, Jawaharlal is by heart the most religious man in India. His so-called irreligiousness has not prevented Jawaharlal from winning as warm an enthusiasm from the masses as Mahatma Gandhi himself. For a statesman the greatest religion is his integrity, foresightedness, clarity and straightforwardness of purpose. And Jawaharlal possesses these qualities in abundance. That he is not befogged with mysticism and spiritual dogmas makes him a greater statesman than Mahatma Gandhi.

About this time Pandit Nehru introduced another creative idea in the Congress procedure. He introduced in the A.I.C. office a practice of addressing all members by their names only. He struck off any prefixes or suffixes. All honorific titles were dropped. Mahatma, Maulana, Pundit, Shaikh, Syed, Munshi, Maulvi, Mr. and Esquire disappeared from the Congress correspondence. "They are so abundantly and often unnecessarily used," says Nehru, "that I wanted to set a good example." But he was not to have his way. Mohammad Ali sent him a frantic telegram. He directed him "as President" to revert to the old practice. Particularly, he told him "always to address Gandhiji as Mahatma." Although Pandit Nehru yielded to his leader, the point is unsettled. Should we keep using these nonsensical honori



Jawaharlal says, "No." And he does not say "No" without reason. He has strong arguments for that. These useless forms of address are a limbo of petrified aristocracy. They militate against the true democratic spirit. Besides, if we do away with ordinary honorifics, the gilded titles conferred by the bureaucracy would pale into insignificance. We covet the bigger titles because we cannot do away with smaller ones. Viewed in this light, Jawaharlal's point was an important step in statesmanship—almost as important as wearing of homespun cloth.

Young Jawaharlal, ever young, had a good fun of religious fervour on the banks of the Ganges in 1924. It was a great bathing fair at Allahabad. A controversy was going on between Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya and the Government. The latter had prohibited bathing because the current was "undoubtedly dangerous for crowds." The Government was perfectly justified, says Nehru. Simply it set about its work in the most wooden way. Nehru was not fond of a religious fair. Nehru had no intention of taking a holy bath. And yet you found Nehru on the 'forbidden banks on the forbidden day.' Malaviya was organising a Satyagraha. On the spur of the moment, Nehru also joined the Satyagraha band in spite of his irreligious nature. The volunteers were stopped by the police. So they all sat down peacefully on the sands. Hour after hour went by. The sand began to burn under them. All grew hungrier. Police stood by on both sides of them. Says young naughty Nehru:

"I was fed up with sitting there. So I suggested to those sitting near me that we might as well cross over the palisade, and I mounted it. Immediately scores of others did likewise, and some even pulled out a few stakes, thus making a passage-way. Somebody gave me a national flag,

and I stuck it on top of the palisade, where I continued to sit."

Imagine an atheist leading a religious invasion forces ! Jawaharlal grew rather excited. He thoroughly enjoyed watching the people clambering up and the mounted troopers trying to push them away. Faint memories of revolutionary barricades came to Nehru. At last he got down on the other side. He was feeling very hot after his exertions. So he decided to have a dip in the Ganges. On his return, he was amazed to find Malaviya sitting on the sands without a bath ! Young politician did the holy performance while the religious giant was still obeying orders of the police.

Early in 1924, Jawaharlal and his father went to see Gandhiji on the Juhu Beach in Bombay. Young Nehru returned a bit disappointed. Gandhiji did not resolve a single one of his doubts. "As is usual with him," says Nehru, "he refused to look into the future, or lay down any long-distance programme." That suggests an important psychological difference between the political policy of Gandhi and the political operations of Nehru. Gandhiji advised him to carry on patiently serving the people. He told him to work for the constructive and social reform programme of the Congress. And then he should await the time for aggressive activity. "The real difficulty, of course, was," says Nehru, "that even when that time came, would not some incident like Chauri Chaura upset all our calculations and again hold us up?" To that Gandhiji gave no answer. Nor was he at all definite in regard to his objective. Jawaharlal wanted to be clear in his own mind about what Gandhiji was driving at. Unluckily a clear-cut definition of policy has never been a characteristic of Gandhiji. And Nehru sought for it in vain. "Precision," says Nehru, "is not loved by most people, especially in a nationalist movement which by its own nature is vague and somewhat

mystical. But this is not so with Nehru. With him clarity is the very life-line of progressive statesmanship. It is the very breath he breathes upon the public pulpit.

Then there came another curious conflict in All-India Congress Committee held in Ahmedabad in 1924. Gandhiji proposed a fundamental alteration in the Congress Constitution. He wanted to limit membership to those who gave a certain amount of self-spun yarn instead of the four annas. "This was a serious limitation of the franchise," says Nehru, "and the A.I.C.C. was certainly not competent to do this. But Gandhiji has seldom cared for the letter of a constitution when this has come in his way." No wonder, Nehru was shocked. He considered it an undemocratic violence to the Congress constitution. He offered his resignation from the Secretaryship, but then the matter was compromised. Young Nehru could never make out why Gandhiji was so keen on that exclusive form of spinning franchise. Although Gandhiji had the majority with him, he was weakened in his resolve. And that was all the greater surprise. "During the next three or four months," says Nehru, "to my amazement he changed several times on this question. He seemed to be completely at sea, unable to find his bearings. That was the one idea that I did not associate with him; and hence my surprise." From Nehru's point of view, the question was not a very vital one. The idea of labour being made the qualification for franchise was a very desirable one; but Nehru did not want that it should be limited to spinning. Those who have read the Russian franchise system and understood its value will doubtlessly vote for Nehru rather than Gandhiji. Nehru passes a correct psychological judgment on Gandhiji :—

"I came to the conclusion that Gandhiji's difficulties had been caused because he was moving in an unfamiliar medium. He was superb in his special field of Satyagrahic

direct action, and his instinct unerringly led him to take the right steps. He was also very good in working himself, and making others work quietly for social reform among the masses. He could understand absolute war or absolute peace. Anything in between he did not appreciate."

More than any other statesman living to-day, Nehru knows the correct working of Gandhiji's mind. Through his intellectual sensitiveness he understands the strength and weakness of the Mahatma's character.

It is not known to many that Nehru's father did not admire Gandhiji as a saint but as a man. "I have heard of saints and supermen," he writes, "but have never had the pleasure of meeting them, and must confess to a feeling of scepticism about their real existence. I believe in men and things only." Strong and unbending himself, Motilal admired the strength of character in Gandhiji. This little man of poor physique had something of steel in him. He had something rock-like which did not yield to physical powers. In spite of his loin-cloth and bare body, there was a royalty and kingliness in him. It compelled a willing obedience from others. His calm, deep eyes would hold one and gently probe into the depths. His voice was clear and limpid. It purred its way into the heart. It evoked an emotional response. The process of "spell-binding" was not brought about by the hypnotism of silken phrases. It was the utter sincerity of the man which gripped. This was what Motilal admired. And what was true of the father is largely true of the son. But Jawaharlal has a deeper reading into the mind of Gandhiji. It is a tradition, he says, that has grown up about Gandhiji which "helped in creating a suitable atmosphere." A stranger not in harmony with the surroundings, "would probably not have been touched by that spell." Gandhiji had the capacity to disarm his opponents, but he

has not been uniformly successful. In the case of Mr. Jinnah at least he has remarkably failed.

Jawaharlal had useful experience as President of the Allahabad Municipality. He found serious defects in the working of the Municipality and carried on the work with an ever-increasing reluctance :—

“ It was not deliberate obstruction on anybody's part; indeed I had a surprising amount of willing co-operation. But on the one side, there was the Government machine, on the other, the apathy of the members of the municipality as well as the public. The whole steel-frame of municipal administration, as erected by the Government, prevented radical growth or innovation. The financial policy was such that the municipality was always dependent on the Government. Most radical schemes of taxation or social development were not permissible under the existing municipal laws. Even such schemes as were legally permissible had to be sanctioned by the Government, and only the optimists, with a long stretch of years before them, could confidently ask for and await their sanction. It amazed me to find out how slowly and laboriously and inefficiently the machinery of Government moved when any job of social construction or of nation building was concerned. There was no slowness or inefficiency, however, when a political opponent had to be urbed or struck down. The contrast was marked.”

Jawaharlal was surprised to find that most of the expenditure was incurred by the “ Civil Lines,” where the English officials and upper class Indians lived, while most of the municipal revenues came from the densely crowded city proper. The latter put up with all the disabilities. It seldom complained. When it did complain, nothing much happened. Nearly all the Big Noises and Little Noises lived in the Civil Lines. Jawaharlal wanted to introduce a tax on land values. The Government strongly opposed the measure. “ Such a

tax," says Nehru, "would obviously have fallen more heavily on the owners of the bungalows in the Civil Lines. But Government approves thoroughly of an indirect tax, like the Octroi which crushes trade, raises prices of all goods, including foodstuffs, and falls most heavily on the poor." This most unsocial levy has been the mainstay of most Indian municipalities.

Jawaharlal found that Municipality jogs along laboriously in the old ruts. "This framework," he says, "is neither democratic nor autocratic; it is a cross between the two, and has the disadvantages of both." Local bodies are not, as a rule, shining examples of success and efficiency. They are just inefficient. Their weak point is nepotism. Their perspectives are all wrong. There is no sense of responsibility. There is no background of informed public. There is an all-pervading atmosphere of authoritarianism. The accompaniments of democracy are lacking.

In March 1926, Jawaharlal took his wife who was seriously ill, to Europe. There he met many Indian exiles and enriched his political experience. He attended the Congress of oppressed Nationalities in Brussels as an official representative of the Indian National Congress. The Brussels Congress was held in February 1927. Some Communists were at the back of it. Help also came from China and Latin America. These were chaffing under economic imperialism. British dependencies were also represented. George Lansbury was elected president. He delivered an eloquent address. His chairmanship was a proof that the Brussels Congress was not a rabid organisation. Nor was it hitched on to the star of Communism. A "League Against Imperialism" was also formed. Madame Sun Yat Sen and Romain Rolland were among the members. Jawaharlal, to be sure, was one of them.

The Brussels Congress helped Nehru "to understand some of the problems of colonial and dependent countries." It also gave him an insight into the inner conflicts of the western labour world. He knew something about them already. He had read about them. But there was no reality behind his knowledge. There had been no personal contacts. "I had some such contacts now," he says, "and sometimes had to face problems which reflected these inner conflicts." He turned inevitably with goodwill towards Communism. For whatever its faults, "it was at least not hypocritical and not imperialistic." His acquaintance was limited at the time to its broad features. Therefore, Nehru's was not a doctrinal adherence. And Communists often irritated him by their dictatorial manners and methods :—

"It was curious how, in our League Against Imperialism Committee meetings, I would usually be on the side of the Anglo-American members on petty matters of argument. There was certain similarity in our outlook in regard to method at least. We would both object to declamatory and long-winded resolutions, which resembled manifestos. We preferred something simpler and shorter, but the Continental tradition was against this. There was often difference of opinion between the Communist elements and the non-communists. Usually we agreed on a compromise. Later on, some of us returned to our homes and could not attend any further Committee meetings."

No wonder, the Brussels Congress was spied upon by Foreign Offices of various governments. The Congress itself was full of international spies. A French secret service man attended the Brussels Congress as a Negro delegate, with his face, hands, etc., all blacked over !

Jawaharlal returned to India in December 1927, on the eve of the Madras Congress. Directly he was caught in the whirl. He presented a bunch of resolutions to the Working

Committee. These dealt with Independence, War Danger, and association with the League Against Imperialism. All of these were accepted and passed at the open session. "This all-round support was very gratifying," says Pandit Nebru, "but I had an uncomfortable feeling that the resolutions were either not understood for what they were, or were distorted to mean something else." His judgment was correct. Soon there arose controversy as to the meaning of the Independence Resolution.

These resolutions represented a new outlook. Many Congressmen no doubt liked them. Some had a vague dislike for them. "The Independence Resolution," says Nehru, "thus did not represent then, as it did a year or two later, a vital and irrepressible urge on the part of the Congress; it represented a widespread and growing sentiment." How right is Nehru! All along he has been feeling the pulse of the masses like a delicate thermometer. That is the noble quality of a good statesman. A politician tries to over-rule the will of the masses, but a statesman tries to understand them and direct their will into desirable channels.

Even Mahatma Gandhi did not show much sympathy with the Independence Resolution. "I do not know," says Nehru, "how far the resolutions I put before the Congress met with his approval. I am inclined to think that he disliked them, not so much because of what they said, but because of their general trend and outlook." Thus Jawaharlal has always been marching ahead of Mahatma Gandhi. It was Edmund Burke, I think, who said that a statesman thinks now of what people will do five years hence. Jawaharlal possesses this quality in a remarkable degree. He has been thinking not only ahead of masses, but ahead of Mahatma too!

Jawaharlal had an unpleasant experience from national point of view. The National Congress always attracts a large number of side-shows. One of those theatrical performances



his death and Lala Lajpat Rai passed away a few weeks later. A wave of indignation spread all over the country. "It was Bhagat Singh who, says Nehru, "seemed to vindicate, for the moment, the honour of Lala Lajpat Rai, and through him of the nation. He became a symbol; the act was forgotten, the symbol remained."

## THE PROMISING POLITICIAN

## CHAPTER IV

## Can Indians Get Together ?

The year 1928 was a year of thought. It was a full before the storm, a vacuum in which Jawaharlal moulded his ideas, looking before and after, towards the India of yesterday and the India of to-morrow. He delivered a remarkable speech in Hindustani at the Punjab Provincial Conference held on April 11th, 1928. "It has become customary at our Congresses and Conferences," he said, "to refer to the crisis which continually confronts us and every year we are told that the situation is more critical than before." That is the appreciation of a practical statesman who does not run away with his imagination. "Too frequent reminders," says Nehru, make the warning lose some of its meaning." And the cry of the wolf often passes unheeded.

At any rate, Pandit Nehru found India approaching the cross-roads of political destiny. He referred to the Simon Commission as "the seven uninvited gentlemen from England." They visited us and threaten to come again. But vaster changes were afoot. The world was in a ferment. Strange forces were at work. The gods of yesterday were neglected. New myths convulsed the people. The challenge to the dead past had gone forth. But Nehru dare not don the role of a prophet. He could not point out with certainty the path of freedom. He found that the Punjab had come to be known as the Ulster of India : —

"The Punjab has earned a bad name for itself in India. It has become the home of faction and strife and communalism. And yet the memory of your province that I always carry with me is of those days, nine years ago, when she bore the brunt of

the battle for India's freedom, and out of her travail and heavy sorrows gave birth to that great movement of non-co-operation which brought daring and hope of liberation to the suffering millions of India. You and I will not remember long the troubles and strifes of to-day and yesterday, but I shall not forget and you will never forget those dark days when this fair province became a racking shamble and we faced the reality of British dominion in all its brutal ugliness. We stand on holy ground to-day here in this Jallianwala Bagh. What was once a wilderness bears to-day a pleasant aspect, but every stone and every blade of grass here tells its story of blood and horror. And standing here can we forget that great sacrifice and lose ourselves in fratricidal strife, or rather shall we repeat our old-time resolve to fight on, all together, in the good fight of freedom, till we put an end utterly to all alien domination ? "

The Punjab has been notorious for casting obstacles in the path of freedom. "But may I confess," said Nehru, "I have a soft corner in my heart for this province and her gallant sons and daughters ? " "The Punjab has erred often. The Punjab has made mountains of little molehills. But the people of the Punjab are "virile men of action." They have allowed their courage and endurance to be "prostituted in the mercenary service of an alien army." But even wrong action is better than inaction. The curse of India to-day is, says Nehru, its incapacity to act. He has every hope that the Punjab would lead in our great struggle. It would be "the strong right arm which will wrest our freedom from the oppressor." The nightmare of communalism would recede into the background. He could sense the old spirit again in the air.

Jawaharlal Nehru commends action. Like Sri Krishna he insists on right action. "Right action," he says, "can only follow clear and dispassionate thinking and some knowledge of the forces that are shaping the modern world." Many

political doctors are prescribing for the diseases that afflict India. But there is seldom a consideration of principles of ultimate ideals. Many Indian politicians, says Nehru, do not think of "the place of India in the world." He wants that international realities must not be ignored. Different meanings are being attached to independence. What then are we aiming at? What manner of country would we like India to be? Says Nehru :

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

"Before we venture to answer these questions it is worth while to take a larger view of world events. We all know the great changes which have followed the industrial revolution, although they have not affected India as much as other countries. Without going into all these changes in detail, some aspects of them might be worthy of consideration here. Industrialism has resulted in greater production and greater wealth, in the concentration of wealth in a few countries and a few individuals, and a more unequal distribution of wealth. It has resulted in a struggle for raw material and markets, and has thus brought into existence the imperialism of the last century. It has caused wars and has given rise to the colonial empires of to-day. It has laid the seed of future wars. And latterly it has taken the shape of an economic imperialism which, without the possession of territory, is as efficient and potent in exploiting other countries as any colonial empire of yesterday. All this is well-known but what is perhaps not sufficiently realised is the international character of industrialism. It has broken down national boundaries and has made each nation, however powerful it may be, dependent on other countries. The idea of nationalism is almost as strong to-day as it was and in its holy name wars are fought and millions slaughtered. But it is a myth which is not in keeping with reality. The world has become internationalist; production is international, markets are international and transport is international; only men's ideas continued to be governed by a

dogma which has no real meaning to-day. No nation is really independent, they are all dependent. The world of reality has changed utterly but our ideas continue in the old rut and thus conflicts arise and society is ever in a ferment. Jawaharlal Nehru wants that we must see carefully the signs of times across the international horizon. He quotes the following verses :—

*The moving finger writes ;*

*And having writ, moves on ;*

*Not all they pity nor will*

*Shall lure it back to cancel half a line.*

We should stop thinking of the Vedic civilization meant for a desert country more than 5,000 years ago. Most of our social laws are relics of the past. They are Shibboleths to-day in conflict with reality. Our ideas are lagging behind. It is not possible to arrest the course of time.

Where the old comes into conflict with the new, progress is bound to be slow. "Where ideas come into line with realities," says Nehru, "the fortunate country advances with a bound." Thus we have an excellent example of deflected, disorganised and dogma-ridden Turkey. Under the inspiring leadership of Kamal Pasha, it changed overnight into a rapidly progressing country. Also Russia has changed common people into men of heroic mould. How can India ignore the rest of the world ? How can she keep herself in splendid isolation ? But Jawaharlal is not blind to evils of industrialization, although he advocates industrialization all the same :

"I have referred to industrialism and its effects on the modern world. Its evils are obvious and many of us dislike them intensely. But whether we like them or not, we must realise that the spread of industrialism cannot be checked. Even in India it is taking giant strides and no country can stop its onward march. Must we also succumb to all the evils which come in its train or is it fruitful for us to adopt industrialism

without its major evils? We must remember that industrialism means the big machine and the machine is but a tool to be used for good or ill. Let us not blame the tool if the man who holds it misuses it and causes injuries thereby.

"In the West industrialism has led to big scale capitalism and imperialism. Many of us who denounce British imperialism in India do not realise that it is not a phenomenon peculiar to the British race or to India, or that it is the necessary consequence of industrial development on capitalist lines. For capitalism necessarily leads to exploitation of one man by another, one group by another and one country by another. Therefore we are opposed to this imperialism and exploitation. We must also be opposed to capitalism as a system and to the domination of one country over another. The only alternative that is offered to us is some form of socialism, that is the state ownership of the means of production and distribution. We cannot escape the choice and if we really care for a better order of society and for ending the exploitation of man by man, we cannot but cast our weight on the side of socialism."

"England may well permit us to have a larger measure of political liberty, says, Nehru, but this will be worth little if she holds economic dominion over us." And no Indian can willingly submit to it, whether he be a capitalist or socialist. "We must remember that poverty and want are no longer economic necessities; although under the present anarchic capitalist system they may be inevitable."

From this Pandit Nehru comes to a very profound conclusion. We are opposed to imperialism. We know that imperialism is a phase of capitalism. Therefore, we must oppose capitalism wherever we meet it. England is a premier capitalist and imperialistic power. Therefore, it is our chief opponent in both the fields. Hence there can be no effective co-operation between India and England. Says Nehru:

"What is the British Empire to-day? The third British

Empire' as an ardent advocate has called it ? If we leave out India and the dependencies, it is like the farmer's cat in *Alice in Wonderland* whose body has entirely disappeared and only the Jim has remained. How long can this disembodied Jim remain. I leave it to you to judge. The world has judged already and few imagine that it will endure long. The Empire is fast approaching dissolution and world crisis may end it. The British people have shown extraordinary ability in adapting themselves to changing circumstances and to this they owe their strength and the long lease of power that they have enjoyed. But the world is moving too fast for them and recent events, specially in relation to India, indicate that their old skill is gone. But whether the Empire endures or not, how can India find a place in it when her national and international economic interests conflict with it in almost every vital matter ? We must recognise internationalism of to-day and act international-ly if we are to face realities. We cannot be independent in narrow sense. When we talk of independence, we mean the severance of the British connection. Afterwards we can develop the friendliest contact with other countries, including England. The British Commonwealth, in spite of its high sounding name, does not stand for this international co-operation, and in its world policy has consistently stood for a narrow and selfish ideal and against the peace of the world."

Economic problem is the real problem of India. The middle classes have always fought for their own advantages. The economic pressure on them was considerable. So the demand took the form of Indianization of services. Higher posts were thrown open to the Indians, but that did not tackle the core of the problem. The educated people have neglected the welfare of the starving millions :—

"Our educated classes have so far taken the lead in the fight for Swaraj. The economic pressure on them was considerable and others were only vocal elements ; and so the demand

has taken the form occasionally of Indianization of services, of higher posts being thrown open to Indians. They are to blame for these demands. They have acted as every class conscious of its interests acts. But in doing so they have seldom paid heed to needs of the masses. Whenever vital questions affecting the masses have arisen they have been shelved, they have been asked to stand over till Swaraj has been attained ! Why confuse the issue now ? It has been said, we can settle our problems later. Like all class-conscious groups, they have considered themselves the most vital elements in the nation and in the name of freedom have really sought to advance their own interests and many of our intellectuals have become staunchest defenders of the privileges of empire as soon as they have had their share of the titles and power. What shall it profit the masses of this country—the peasantry, the landless labourers, the workers, the shopkeepers, the artisans—if everyone of the offices held by Englishmen in India is held by Indians ? It may benefit them a little as they can bring more pressure to bear on their own people than on an alien government. But fundamentally this condition cannot improve until the social fabric is changed and I think that the only effective change can be the formation of a democratic socialistic state. But even from the narrow point of view of our intellectuals it is now well recognised that no effective pressure can be brought to bear on the British Government without mass support. But in spite of recognition there is the fear of the masses and little is done. Mass support cannot come for vague ideal of Swaraj. It can only come when the masses realise what Swaraj means for them. Therefore it is essential that we must clearly lay down an economic programme, must have an ultimate ideal in view and must also provide for the immediate steps to be taken to bring them relief.”

Communism is the child of this self-seeking. We



must fight ruthlessly against communalism. Pandit Nehru has formed a correct estimate of communalism : —

“ It may be giant to-day but it has feet of clay. It is the outcome largely of anger and passion and when we regain our temper it will fade into nothingness. It is a myth with no connection with reality and it cannot endure. It is really the creation of our educated classes in search of office and employment. How do the economic interests of a Hindu or Muslim or Sikh differ from each other ? Certainly not because they have to profess different faiths. It may be that if there is a vacancy for a judgeship of a High Court, or a like occasion, the raising of the communal issue may profit an individual. But how does it generally profit his community ? What does it matter to the Muslim peasant whether a Hindu or a Muslim is a judge in Lahore ? Economic interests run along different lines. There is a great deal in common between the Muslim and Sikh and Hindu zamindars : and great deal in common between the Muslim and Sikh and Hindu peasantry ; very little is common between a Muslim peasant and a Muslim zamindar. We must therefore begin to think of an act on live economic issues. If we do so, the myth of communalism will automatically disappear. Conflict there may be, but it will be between different classes and not different religions.”

We must face the reality and lay our fingers on the real source of communalism. We must take up strong attitude now. We must not permit the communalists to have their way. But communalism is intermingled with British imperialism. And we must fight the both together. Jawaharlal lays down boycott of British goods as an effective means of resistance to British capitalism and imperialism. He sums up his philosophy of boycott as follows : —

“ There is a strong movement in the country to-day to boycott British cloth only. This is perfectly justified and if

we could do so we would force the hands of England. But there is the serious danger of our failing to do so. If we permit other foreign cloth to come in, British cloth will then creep in the guise of Japanese or some other foreign cloth and it will be impossible both for the ordinary purchaser or the retailer to distinguish between the two. This practical difficulty seems to be inseparable and it would thus appear that in order to boycott British cloth, we must boycott all foreign cloth. Another advantage this would bring us would be that *khadi* and mill cloth in India would co-operate with each other for the boycott. If we favour other foreign cloth, there can be no co-operation between the mills and the *khadi* producers in India. We must, therefore, concentrate on the boycott of all foreign cloth, thereby also helping tremendously our manufacture. A boycott of foreign cloth to-day really means boycott of British cloth. It means our displacing one-third of the cloth we consume which comes from foreign countries by cloth manufactured by us. This should offer no great difficulty, if our *khadi* organisation and our cotton mills co-operate in the task instead of competing with each other. It is well known that *khadi* can be produced in almost unlimited quantities at short notice if there is demand for it. Our mills even with their existing machinery can also greatly increase their output. Thus, there is no doubt that we are in a position to produce enough to boycott foreign cloth totally and in the near future, provided only the will to do so is present. It is for the public to express this will. If they do so all other difficulties will disappear. We cannot expect those who profit by the import of foreign cloth to feel enthusiastic over the boycott; it must cause loss to the importers and others in the trade. But are we to sacrifice the interest of India and her millions for the sake of a handful of importers? Most of our millowners also have not a good record. They have in the past

sought to profit by national sentiment in India, they have taken enormous dividends and yet have treated pitiously the poor workers who were the foundations of their fortunes. To-day instead of combating foreign cloth many of them are competing with coarse *khadi* and are thus profiting even by the *khadi* sentiment of the people. If they could see far enough and knew their real interest, they would realise that their progress is bound up with the good will of the people, and their whole-hearted co-operation in the boycott would benefit them even more than it would the nation."

Jawaharlal could see with a clear vision that the capitalist regime of Europe must lead to World War Number Two. No wonder, he looked prophetically in 1928 and gave an advice to the people of the Punjab which he repeated in 1939, and the whole country joined to practise in 1942. It is a magnificent document of prophecy and will be remembered for all time to come. It contains sentiments of internationalism, which is the very thread of Indian nationalism, and which is founded on the rock of spiritual philosophy. Edmund Burke expects a good statesman to look five years ahead; but Jawaharlal is looking eleven years ahead in the following passage:—

"But if war comes, and everything indicates that it will come before long, we shall have to face other and more vital problems than that of boycott of foreign cloth. The Madras Congress has given us a lead in this matter and it is for this province to ponder over this lead, for the real burden of action will fall on the Punjab. You and your gallant soldiers have been exploited enough in the past, not in India only, but in the four quarters of the world. Even to-day they are made to do the dirty work of British imperialism in China, in Persia and in Mesopotamia, and they are used to suppress people who are our friends and neighbours and who have done us no harm. It is time that we put an end to this

shameful exploitation of the courage of our manhood. We are told that we are not capable of defending our country against the foreign invasion, but our soldiers are capable enough of defending the British Empire, in Europe, in Asia and in Africa. You know how our man-power and our wealth was exploited by the British during the last war. You know also the measure of return that we got for our help, it was the Rowlett Act and Martial Law in the Punjab. Are you prepared to be deluded again, to be exploited again and to be thrown into the scrap-heap again? Wise men, they say, profit by the failures and experiences of others; ordinary men by their own experience; and fools by neither. We may not be very wise, but let us not be fools either. Let us make up our minds now, what we shall do when a crisis comes. Let us decide that whatever else we may or may not do, we shall not permit ourselves to be exploited by British imperialism. Let us say with the Madras Congress that if the British Government embarks on any warlike adventure and endeavours to exploit India, it will be our duty to refuse to take any part in such a war or to co-operate with them in any way whatsoever. This will be no easy matter. It will mean our having to face and endure fines and hardship. But if we have the courage to face them and the capacity to endure them to the end and the statesmanship not to compromise, we shall emerge triumphant from this ordeal and our country which has so long suffered alien domination will be free again."

In July 1942 Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru cabled a message to the "New York Times" Magazine of America. It sought to answer the charges of disunity brought by the British Rulers against the Indian people in support of their reluctance to part with political power. After a careful and convincing analysis of the present problems of India, Nehru asserts that Indian unity is not only possible but a dead certainty if

interested interference from outside in her internal affairs ceases. Nehru explains the title of his message with an ironic touch.

"Can Indians get together? It is an odd title yet a significant one, for it tells us much in four words. It gives us an intimate and revealing glimpse into the minds of those who framed it. It reveals to us the premises and assumptions on which they base their consideration of the Indian problem. It displays that patronizing superiority of outlook which we have come to associate with Westerners when they deal with Eastern nations. It has something of the white man's burden about it.

War has changed the face of the world, but even greater changes are happening in the minds of men. The nations of Europe have made a mess of this world. Their eternal hates, their grabbing violence and cut-throat opportunism have brought two world wars in the course of a single generation. They are not able to look after their own houses. Yet they pose as the mentors of Asia! A lack of something brings the achievements of Europe periodically to nought. Asia has looked upon this hanging scene with the strength of ages behind her. The last two hundred years of suffering in Asia are a brief interlude in her long history. Asia has little to learn from Europe. Asia has much to teach about the art of living. Nehru continues:—

"Can the Indians get together! Yes, certainly, if impediments in their way created by foreign authority are removed, if they can face their problems without external interference. Every problem finally will be solved either by peaceful means or by conflict, though this may give rise to new problems. Independent India will solve her problems or cease to be. The past history of India shows us how she has successfully tackled her problems and out of every conflict of

opposing forces has produced a new synthesis. Synthesis is a dominant trait of Indian civilization and history.

Except for China, there is no great country in the world which has shown such powerful unity throughout the ages as India. That unity took political shape only rarely as it could not be stabilized until relatively recent development in transport and communications made this easy. If these developments had not taken place, it is possible that the United States of America might not have been a single nation."

If the peoples of America can get together, the peoples of India definitely can! The British have encouraged feudal elements and prevented industrial growth. The continuing process of synthesis was arrested. Disruptive forces were set in motion. The British had their cultural roots across the seas. They resisted absorption and lived on as exploiters. Nehru down the causes and cure of communalism as follows:—

"Thirty years ago the British Government introduced the principle of separate religious electorates in India, a fatal thing which has come in the way of development of political parties. Now they have tried to introduce the idea of partitioning India, not only into two but possibly many separate parts. This was one of the reasons which led to bitter resentment of the Cripps' Proposals. The All-India Congress could not agree to this, yet it went far and said if any territorial unit clearly declared its desire to break away, the Congress could not think in terms of compelling it to stay in the Union."

So far as minorities are concerned, it is accepted on common ground that they should be given fullest constitutional protection, religious, cultural, linguistic and every other way. Backward minorities or classes should in addition be given special educational and other privileges to bring them rapidly to the general level.

The real problem so often referred to is that of the Muslims. They are hardly a minority, as they number about nine crores and it is difficult to see how even a majority can oppress them. As it happens, they are largely concentrated in particular provinces. It is proposed to give full provincial autonomy to every province reserving only certain All-India subjects for the Central Government, and this will give every opportunity for self-development in each cultural area. Indeed, there may even be smaller autonomous cultural areas within the province.

It is possible to devise many ways to give satisfaction to every conceivable minority claim. The Congress has said this must be done by agreement, not by a majority vote. If agreement is not possible on any point, then impartial arbitration should be accepted. Finally, if any territorial unit insists on breaking away after the experience of working in the union, there is going to be no compulsion to force it to stay, provided such severance is geographically possible.

The real problem of India, according to Nehru is not communal but economic. The economic problems cut across religious boundaries. They are common to Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Sikhs and others. Besides, minority matters may be referred to international arbitration, if necessary. The Indian National Congress is prepared to abide by the decision of such an international tribunal. But the question of arbitration does not arise over the question of independence. "On independence," says Nehru, "we cannot compromise." The right of independence and the allied question of self-determination must be recognised immediately. Nehru sums up the whole position as follows :—

"Can the Indians get together ? I have no doubt that they can and they will. Even to-day there is an amazing unity of outlook among them and whatever their internal differences

seeking politician would have it otherwise. Even when he thinks of breaking away from the British Empire, a profound student of Nehru's mind would find that it is not for political but for economic reasons. He unfolded his mind on this point in the Kerala Provincial Conference—

"India has little in common with England and her economic interests conflict in almost every particular with those of England. An imperial bond between the two can only be an enforced union productive of ill-will and continuous friction and must of necessity be to the advantage of England.

"For the present, however, the union must necessarily be the union of the lion and the lamb with the lamb inside the lion. This is evident if we study the relations of England with other countries like China, Persia, Mesopotamia and Egypt. She has opposed all attempts at freedom of these countries and only recently we had an amazing example of her imperial policy in Independent Egypt. Even in regard to the countries of Europe, she is acknowledged to be the main obstacle to world-peace and co-operation. It is inconceivable therefore that India can have a real measure of freedom within the limits of the British Empire."

One important plea of Jawaharlal is that the Indian National Congress must not sacrifice its principles for the temporary purpose of getting together with other parties. Unity is important, but even more important than unity is the sanctity of a principled action. Thus he argued :

"It is said that by laying stress on Independence, we antagonised other parties in the country just when the need for the unity was the greatest. Unity is certainly most desirable, but can unity be achieved by the sacrifice of our principles? Our opponents and even those of our colleagues for whose sake we sacrifice our principles will respect us the less for it.



Let us respect even sentiments and the prejudices of others. But let us not give in on any matter which we consider vital. The Congress has already shown its desire to co-operate whenever it can with other groups and parties without giving up our ideals and our goal. We have co-operated whole-heartedly with others for the boycott of the Simon Commission and are to-day co-operating with numerous groups in the All-Parties Conference. We could give no greater evidence of our goodwill, and our tolerance cannot extend to sacrifice of the principle and the goal ; and the ideal we have set before us is too vivid to be forgotten or discarded for a temporary compromise. We have to travel the road together respecting each other and it may be that when we reach the cross-roads we may have converted many others to our view. If we fail to do so, we would agree to differ and part company without rancour, or ill-will."

Hence it is no easy job to draft a constitution satisfactory to all the interests in India. To get together without sacrificing fundamental principles is a very difficult job although by no means can it be considered impossible. And yet it must be done. A satisfactory constitution can be easily drafted if the different parties are true to their principles and do not play to the tunes of the British Government. It is the prejudice, unreason and self-seeking among the leaders of India which is the real political danger. Pandit Nehru thus lays down :—

" 'Unhappily' it is not possible in this world of ours to-day to produce an ideal constitution. We cannot ignore prejudice and unreason but let us at any rate try to approximate to the ideal as far as we can. The history of India tells us that danger has always come because of the want of central authority. We have too much decentralisation. If we are to build up a strong India we must have a strong Central

Government but at the same time we cannot afford to kill the rich and varying cultures of India by having too much uniformity and discouraging local effort and enterprise. In other countries the tendency to-day is to give full local autonomy to cultural areas. We must, therefore, while laying stress on a strong Central Government, accept the principle of giving considerable autonomy to different areas having traditions and cultures of their own. The best test of a culture is that of language. There may be too many small autonomous areas. The economic life of the country may suffer; but this can be safeguarded by giving up powers to large areas including several autonomous cultural areas. If this principle is kept in mind and if in addition we have joint electorates and proper safeguards for all the minorities and backward groups, I think we might evolve a satisfactory constitution period at least."

Pandit Nehru wants women to take an active part in the struggle for freedom. But before fighting for the freedom of their country, it is essential that the women must first secure their own liberty from social bondage. It is characteristic of Pandit Nehru that a mere political emancipation means nothing to him. He wants every citizen to enjoy the ripe fruit of freedom from all social, economic and political yokes. Thus he exhorted the women in the Mahila Vidyapitha Hall at Allahabad on March 31, 1928:—

"If this Vidyapitha really stands for the progress of our women, it must attack these evil customs. But I should like to remind the women present here that no people, no group, no community, no country, has ever got rid of its disabilities by the generosity of the oppressor. India will not be free until we are strong enough to force our will on England and the women of India will not attain their full rights by the mere generosity of the men of India. They will have to fight for

them and force their will on the menfolk before they can succeed.

"I hope, therefore, that this Vidya-pitha will be instrumental in sending out, into the province and the country, women who are rebels against the unjust and tyrannical social customs of the day and who will fight all who oppose this progress, women who are as much soldiers of the country as the best men. (*Cheers*)."

While Pandit Nehru wants young men and young women to shoulder the burden of India's progress, he wants them to keep in close touch with youth's movements in other parts of the world. It is characteristic of Pandit Nehru's statesmanship that he derives his national inspiration from the fountain-head of international politics and history. Believing that the youth alone can work for the unity and freedom of India, he wants them not to misspend their energy having been misled by the political prophets. Pandit Nehru gave a realistic warning to youngmen in the All-Bengal Students Conference held in Calcutta on September 22, 1928 : —

"It is the realisation of the common bond of humanity that has given rise to the great youth movement of to-day. Many of you may be too young to remember the despair and the feeling of revolt in the minds of youth during and specially after the Great War. Old men sat in their comfortable cabinets and banking houses and hid their selfishness and greed and lies under a cover of fine phrases and appeals for freedom and democracy. And the young, believing in these fine phrases, went out by the millions to face death and few returned. Seventy millions of them were mobilised and of the fifteen millions that actually served on the front over eight millions died and over five-and-a-half millions were maimed for life. Think of these terrible figures and then remember that they were all young men with their lives stretching out in front of them and their hopes unfulfilled ! And what did this awful sacrifice bring forth ?

A peace of violence and an aggravation of all the ills that the world was suffering from ! You remember well that the first fruits of the peace in India were the Rowlett Act and Martial Law. You know also how the fine principle of self-determination, which the allies shouted from the house-tops, has been applied to India and to other countries. A new cloak for the greed of the imperialist powers was created in the shape of mandates and in awarding mandates the "principal consideration" was to be the preference of the inhabitants. This preference was shown unaccountably by rebellion against the British in Mesopotamia and the bomb against the French in Syria. But the aeroplane and the bomb was the British answer in Iraq and the ancient and beautiful city of Damascus was reduced to ruins by the French. In Europe itself the peace created far more problems than it solved."

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru asks if the young men and young women of India can dare think and dare to act. "Are you prepared," he says, "to stand shoulder to shoulder with the youth of the world, not only to free your country from an insolent and alien rule but also to establish in this unhappy world of ours a better and a happier society?" Thus nationalism and internationalism are inextricably intermingled in the statesmanship at Pandit Nehru. He can think of India only in the background of international politics. This is a unique quality in which Mahatma Gandhi is remarkably deficient. Even while studying the Indian situation, never for a moment does he forget the Indian domination apart from the British domination. Thus he advises young people to sweep away every obstacle "whether it is placed by our alien rulers or has the prestige of ancient custom." This all-round comprehensiveness is a rare gift of Nehru's psychology.

His advice has a charm for every young nationalist:—

“You must have your ideal clear-cut before you. How else can you hope to build the great structure of your dream? Can you build a palace on the foundations of a mud-hut, or a fine bridge with straw? With definite ideas of your goal you will gain clearness of purpose and effectiveness of action and each step that you take will carry you nearer to your heart's desire.”

“What shall this ideal be? National independence and perfect freedom to develop on the lines of our own choosing is the essential requisite of all progress. Without it there can be no political or economic or social freedom. But national independence should not mean for us merely an addition to the warring groups of nations. It should be a step towards the creation of a world commonwealth of nations in which we can assist in the fullest measure to bring about world co-operation and world harmony.”

“But there can be no world co-operation as long as one country dominates over and exploits another and one group or class exploits another. Therefore, we shall have to put an end to all exploitation of man by man or woman by woman. You cannot have a purely political ideal, for politics is after all only a small part of life, although situated as we are under alien rule, it dominates every branch of our activity. Your ideal must be a complete whole and must comprise life as it is to-day, economic, social as well as political. It can only be a social equality in the widest sense and equality of opportunity for every one. It is notorious that we have neither of these to-day.”

Randit Nehru lays great stress on the causes and cure of poverty in India. The youth of the country must appreciate the new forces and new ideas that are convulsing the world. Socialism, he says, is the only hope of distraught mankind.

During the last Great War even the capitalist countries of Europe were forced to adopt 'socialistic measures to a large extent. There was co-operation in many fields. National boundaries receded into the background. Even the armies of many nations became an army under a single head. Nehru says to youngmen, "If your ideal is to be one of social equality and a world federation then perforce we must work for a socialist state." Socialism frightens many people in this country. Fear is their constant companion. "Ignorant of everything important that has happened in the world of thought since they left their school books," says Nehru, "they fear what they do not and will not understand." If the 'old blockheads of India are shy of socialism, they tremble before the march of communism. Yet these are the terms which they do not understand. In fact, they are not allowed to grasp their meaning. Jawaharlal Nehru explains the implications of communism in a most lucid manner:—

"Socialism frightens some of our friends, but what of communism? Our elders sitting in their council chambers shake their grey heads and stroke their beards in alarm at the mere mention of the word.

"And yet I doubt if any of them has the slightest knowledge of what communism is. You have read of the two new measures which are being rushed through the Assembly—one of them to throttle the Trade Union movement and the other to keep out people whom the Government suspects of communism. Has it struck you that it is a very curious thing that the mighty British Empire with all its tanks and aeroplanes and dreadnoughts should be afraid of a few individuals who come to spread a new idea? What is there in this new idea that the British Empire should collapse like a pack of cards before this airy nothing? Surely you could not have better evidence of the weakness of this giant empire

which sprawls over the fairest portions of the earth's surface. It is a giant with feet of clay. But if an idea is a dangerous thing, it is also a very elusive thing. It crosses frontiers and custom barriers without paying a duty, and bayonets and men of war cannot stop it. The Government of India must be strangely lacking in intelligence if they imagine that they can stop any ideas from entering India by legislation.

"What is this communist idea before which the British Empire quakes? I do not propose to discuss it here but I wish to tell you that though personally I do not agree with many of the methods of the communists and I am by no means sure to what extent communism can suit present conditions in India, I do believe in communism as an ideal of society. For essentially it is socialism and socialism, I think, is the only way if the world is to escape disaster.

"And Russia, what of her? An anti-caste like us from the nations and much slandered and often erring. But in spite of her many mistakes she stands to-day as the greatest opponent of imperialism and her record with the nations of the East has been just and generous. In China and Turkey and Persia of her own free will, she gave up her valuable rights and concessions; whilst the British bombarded the crowded Chinese cities and killed Chinamen by the hundreds because they dared to protest against British imperialism.

"In the city of Tabriz in Persia when the Russian ambassador first came, he called the populace together and on behalf of the Russian nation tendered formal apology for the sins of the Tsars. Russia goes to East as equal, not as a conqueror or a race-proud superior. Is it any wonder that she is welcomed?

"Some of you may go in after years to foreign countries for your studies. If you go to England you will realise in full measure what race prejudice is. If you go to the continent

of Europe you will be more welcome whether you go to France or Germany or Italy. If any of you go to Russia you will see how racial feeling is utterly absent and the Chinamen through the Universities of Moscow are treated just like others.

"I have placed before you the ideals in internationalism and socialism as the only ideals worthy of the fine temper of youth. Internationalism can of course only come to us through national independence. It cannot come through the British Empire or the British Commonwealth of Nations, call it what you will, for that Empire is to-day the greatest foe of internationalism. If in future England chooses to enter a World Federation none will welcome her more than we, but she will have to shed her imperialism before she can enter. Our quarrel is not with the people of England but with the imperialism of England."

The world is in a bad way. India especially is in a perilous state. The glitter and glory of our great cities should not blind us. While exposing the frightful poverty of India in 1923, Pandit Nehru made a courageous prediction about the Second World War. "There are rumours of War," he said, "and awful prophecies that the next war may result in irretrievable disaster to civilization. But the very excess of evil may hasten the cure." How correct the trend of events have proved Pandit Nehru! The world is changing at a great speed. And we must change with the world. Great men have come from age to age. Greater than any man is the idea he has left behind. A custom which was good in the past may be perilous to society to-day. "You do not go to Bombay to-day in a bullock-cart or fight with bows and arrows," he says, "Why stick to customs which were good only in the days of the bullock-cart and bows and arrows?" "And the great men who have come have always been



rebels against the existing order. Two thousand five hundred years ago the great Buddha proclaimed his gospel of social equality and fought against all privileges, priestly and other-wise. He was a champion of the people against all who sought to exploit them. Then came another great rebel, Christ, and then the Prophet of Arabia, who did not hesitate to break and change almost everything he found. They were realists who saw that the world had outgrown its ancient practices and customs and sought to bring it back to reality. Even so we have outgrown the creeds and rituals of yesterday and as realists we must not hesitate to discard them wherever they clash with reality. The *anars* of to-day are great ideas which come to reform the world. And the idea of the day is social equality. Let us listen to it and become its instruments to transform the world and make it a better place to live in.

"I may be a weak instrument capable of doing little by myself in spite of my ardent desire to do much. And you individually may be able to do little. But you and I together can do much and working with the awakened youths of this country we can and will achieve freedom. For youth only can save this country and the world. I do not admire the Fascists but I admire them for having as their war-cry a hymn to youth: *Giovinetza*. And I wish you would also adopt their motto "Live dangerously." Let our elders seek security and stability. Our quest must be adventure, but adventure in a noble enterprise which promises to bring peace to a distracted world and security and stability to the millions who have it not.

"You and I are Indians and to India we owe much, but we are human beings also and to humanity we also owe a debt. Let us be citizens of the Commonwealth of Empire of Youth. This is the only empire to which we

can owe allegiance, for, that is the forerunner to the future federation of the world."

"The society must have the urge to change. Without this urge the society becomes lifeless. Gradually it withers away. "So long therefore as the world is not perfect," says Nehru, "a healthy society must have the seeds of revolt in it." This is a stroke of radical statesmanship. It is the function of youth to supply this dynamic element in society. They must be the standard bearers of revolt against all that is evil. There is something radically wrong with the world. Two thousand five hundred years ago, the Prince Siddhartha, who later became the great Buddha, saw this misery and in agony of spirit put himself the great question :

"How can it be that Brahma

Would make a world and keep it miserable?  
 Since all-powerful he leaves it so,  
 He is not good, and if not powerful,  
 He is not God."

The immediate purpose of every human being must be to reduce this misery. Every one must help in building up a better society. Pandit Nehru lays a great stress on ideology that a young man should place before himself in life. A statesman without a clear-cut ideology is a babe in the wilderness.

In December 1928 Pandit Nehru delivered another remarkable speech in the Bombay Presidency Youth Conference. He exhorted the young people not to fall into the ancient rut and forget the spirit of adventure and dare-devilry. At the years creep on them, they should share the abounding hope and courage. "I have come," he said, "because the call of youth is an imperative one and few can say no to it." Jawaharlal was a little tired and weary of conferences and a little

doubtful of the extent of their utility. Therefore, he asked the young men to put conferences to a proper use.

"Why do people meet in conferences? Why have you met here to-day? Not surely just to deliver speeches and listen to them or as a mere diversion from your work and play. Not simply to play a prominent part in the political or social area, to become a celebrity and be intoxicated by the applause of the multitude. You have met here, I take it, because you are not content with things as they are and seek to change them. Because you do not believe that all is for the best in this best of all possible worlds. Because you feel the weight on your young shoulders of the sorrow and misery of this country and this world of ours, and with the energy and fine temper of youth you believe that you have it in you to remove this load of sorrow or at least to lessen its weight. If this is the urge that has brought you here, then you have met well and out of your meeting and deliberations something of permanent good might emerge. But if you are not dissatisfied with existing conditions, if you have not felt this urge which makes you restless and drives and lashes you to action; then wherein do you differ from the gathering of older people who talk and debate and argue much and act little? It is not those who are continually seeking security and have made a god of discretion who reform the world. It is not the sleek and shiny people having more than their share of this world's goods who are the apostles of change. The world changes and progresses because of those who are dissatisfied and who are not prepared to tolerate the evils and injustice of things as they are or have them.

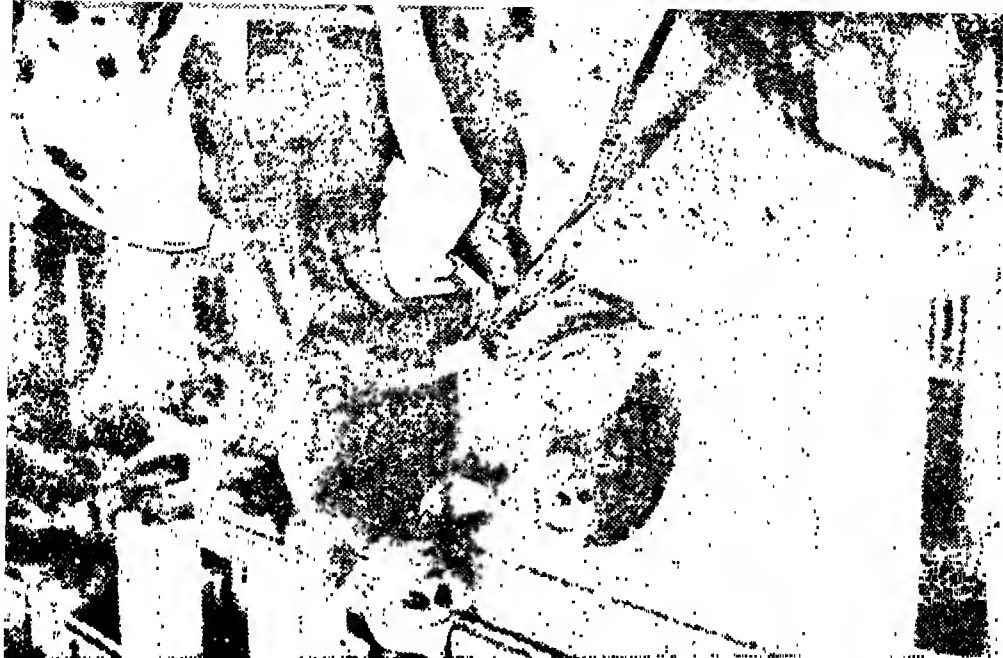
"Many of you may wonder why I am addressing you in this somewhat academic vein. I do so partly because I am no orator or platform-hero and partly because I feel that most

of our troubles are due to a false ideology. Foreign, political and economic domination is bad enough, but the acceptance by us of the ideology of our rulers is to my mind even worse, for it stunts all efforts and sends us wandering aimlessly in blind alleys with no opening. I want, therefore, as far as I can, to get my own thinking straight and to remove the cobwebs from my brain, and I should like you also to do likewise. It will do us little good to repeat the political catch-words of the day without clear thinking on our part as to what we are aiming at and how we can attain our goal. I shall welcome your agreement with me, but that would mean little, if it had not been preceded by thought and conviction. I am much more concerned with finding in you a true appreciation of the present condition of the world, a passionate desire to better it, and an earnest spirit of enquiry as to what to do and how to do it. Reject utterly what I say to you if you think it is wrong. But reject also everything, however hallowed it may be by tradition and convention and religious sanction if your reason tells you that it is wrong or unsuited to the present condition. For 'religions,' as the Chinese say, 'are many, but reason is one.' 'So long as imperialism is not rooted out, mankind will be exploited. If some persons join the ranks of the exploiters, it will not bring freedom to the many. The efforts of the reformers are checkmated by the Government. The British have become the guardians of Hindu and Muslim customs. They were eloquent over the beauties of Hindu and Islamic ideals. 'It is a strange sight,' says Nehru, 'with a moral that none can miss, to see the Christian rulers of India pretending to become the bulwarks of Hinduism and Islam.' Religion has always been used as an opiate to dull men's desire for freedom.

"Before we approach our ideal we have to combat two sets of opponents—political and social. We have to overcome

**India's Uncrowned King**  
 d his "Heir." Although Jawa-  
 rial has hesitated to shoulder  
 trship, the whole world knows  
 at there is no other leader who  
 n carry on so magnificently the  
 od work which Mahatma  
 indhi has begun.

**The noble man and  
 noble woman, Jawaharlal  
 Alia Ben, the two distinguish  
 children of Mother India,  
 viding merrily at Simla.**





our alien rulers as well as the social reactionaries of India. In the past we have seen the curious phenomenon in India of the political extremist sometimes being a reactionary in social matters and not unoften the political moderate has been socially more advanced. But it is impossible to separate the political life of the country from its social and economic life and you cannot cure the social organism by treating one part of it only. The infection from one affected part continually spreads to other parts and the disease takes firmer root. Your political and social philosophy must, therefore, be a complete whole and your programme must comprise every department of national activity."

"It is clear to-day, even if there was some doubt of it in the past, that the social reactionary is the ally of those who wish to keep India in subjection. If any proof was needed of this self-evident fact, the events of the past few months have provided it. You have seen and you have helped in the magnificent boycott of the Simon Commission. You have also seen how some people and some groups have co-operated with this Commission and joined in welcoming it in defiance of the national will. Who are these people and these groups? Almost invariably you will find that they are the social reactionaries, communalists, those who want favours and privileges for themselves at the expense of the larger community."

The spirit of intellectual revolt must spread to custom. The rival ideas are fighting for mastery to-day. To a large extent both the evolutionary and the revolutionary methods work side by side. Every revolution is pierced by process of evolution. "But the difference of ideology is of vital importance," says Nehru. We must make our choice. And throw all our strength in favour of liberty.

"If any of you believe that you can force power out

of those who possess it to-day by sweet reason and argument then all I can say is that you have not read history with much profit, nor have paid much heed to recent events in India. The problem before us is the problem of the conquest of power. In our Councils and Assemblies where fine speeches, however strongly-worded they may be, do not affect the seat of power, we see an outward show of argument and reason, although even then the attitude of official spokesmen is often insulting and overbearing. But go outside to the fields and the market place and you will find that whenever there is a clash between the popular will and the will of the Government, however peaceful the people may be, the Government meets them, not by argument and reasons, but by the bayonet and the policeman's baton, by shooting and sometimes by martial law. The fundamental fact of the situation is the bayonet and baton. How can you argue or be sweetly reasonable with cold steel or dead wood? You must meet them, if you wish to overcome them, by other methods; by the development of sanctions greater and more powerful than the bayonet and baton that face you.

"The Government, it is said, must preserve law and order. What matters it, if this results in the gravest disorder and in death and injury to the people? Every Indian knows the crimes that have been and are being committed in the name of law and order and yet there are some of us still who are obsessed by this notion. Law and order are the last refuge of the reactionary, of the tyrant and of him who has power and refuses to part with it. There can be no law or order till freedom comes, for as the French philosopher Proudhon said, 'Liberty is not the daughter but the mother of order.'"

The voice that claims freedom must be the voice of



revolt. It is the dull and threatening roar from a hundred thousand throats. The sweetly-modulated tone of an orator can accomplish little. Let it be the roar of the masses for freedom. "When that voice is raised," says Nehru, "England, as she has always done in the past, will bow to the inevitable. But if that voice is not raised, do not imagine that you can coax or trick the English people out of power." This voice of masses will only be raised if we put before them an ideal and a programme which improves their economic condition. It will be followed by action only if the end is worth the struggle. We should choose our allies wisely. We must ally ourselves with the vital elements in the nation. We should ally ourselves with the masses of the country—the peasantry and the industrial workers. Let us avoid the pitfalls of reformism and petty compromise. Have your pulse on reality. Let your programme be a live programme. Freedom for the masses must mean the end of all types of exploitation.

"The freedom of India is dear to all of us here. But there may be many here who have the ordinary conveniences of life and are not hard put to it to find their daily bread. Our desire for freedom is a thing more of the mind than of the body, although even our bodies often suffer for the lack of freedom. But to the vast masses of our fellow countrymen present conditions spell hunger and deepest poverty, an empty stomach and a bare back. For them freedom is a vital bodily necessity, and it is primarily to give them food and clothing and the ordinary amenities of life that we should strive for freedom. The most amazing and terrible thing about India is her poverty. It is not a dispensation from Providence or an inevitable condition of society. India has enough or can have enough for all her children if an alien government

and some of her own sons did not corner the good things and so deprive the masses of their dues. "Poverty," said Ruskin "is not due to natural inferiority of the poor or the inscrutable laws of God, or drink, but because others have picked their pockets." And the control of wealth by the few not only means the unhappiness of many but it exercises a power over men's minds, so that they do not wish for freedom. It is this mental outlook which paralyses the poor and the oppressed and it is this mentality of defeatism that you will have to fight.

"You have been the leaders of the youth movement in India and you have built up a strong and living organism. But remember that organisations and institutions are passive instruments of man. They become living and vital only when they are pushed onward by the strength of great ideas. Have great ideals before you and do not lower them by ignoble compromise. Look deep down to where the millions toil in field and factory and look across the frontiers of India to where others like you are facing problems similar to yours. Be national, the sons and daughters of your ancient motherland, working for her liberation; and be international, members of the Republic of Youth, which knows no boundaries or frontiers or nationalities and works for the liberation of the world from all tyranny and injustice. 'To do great things,' said a Frenchman many years ago, 'a man must live as if he had never to die.' None of us can evade death, but youth, at least does not think of it. Old men work for the span of years that still remain for them; the young work for eternity."

# The Supreme Statesman

## CHAPTER V

INDIA OF 1929 had not forgotten the events of 1919. Ten

years of time and tide could not wash away the unfortunate happenings of the Jallianwala Bagh. The agony of Amritsar was still shrieking like a tortured babe in the hearts of the people. No wonder, the 1929 Congress was going to be held in Lahore. India's face had changed. Political

tension was growing. The atmosphere of struggle was developing fast. The long shadow of the conflict to come lay over the land. "The Legislative Assembly and the Provincial Councils," says Pandit Nehru, "had long ceased to interest any one, except the handful who moved in their sacred orbits. They carried on in their humdrum way, providing a torn and tattered cloak for the despotic Government.

Vithalbhai Patel had become a thorn in the tender side of the Government. Attempts were made to clip his wings. Such happenings attracted attention. Gandhiji was still keeping away from politics. His main activity for some years had been *khadi* propaganda. Motilal Nehru was thoroughly disillusioned with Council work. Pt. Nehru thus describes his father's political psychology at the moment:—

"Constitutionally-minded as he was and used to legal methods and procedure, force of circumstances had driven him to the painful conclusion that the so-called constitutional methods were ineffective and futile in India. He would justify this to his own legalist mind by saying there was no constitution in India, nor was there any real rule of law, when laws, in the shape of ordinances and the like, appeared

suddenly, like rabbits from a conjurer's hat, at the will of an individual or a dictating group."

The father of Jawaharlal was a pillar of constitutionalism but in the existing conditions he saw nothing but a parade of a sham parliament. Jawaharlal at this time shared the restlessness of his father rather than the constructive programme of Mahatma Gandhi. Thus he writes magnificently:

"I had plenty of other work to do, and had no desire to confine myself to *khadi* propaganda, which seemed to me a relatively minor activity in view of the developing political situation. To some extent I resented Gandhi's pre-occupation with non-political issue, and I could never understand the background of his thought."

In these days Gandhi was collecting funds for *khadi* work. He would say frequently that he wanted mercy for *Dardranarayana*. It means 'Lord of the Poor' or 'God that resides in the Poor'. He meant no doubt that he wanted to help the poor and to find employment and work in cottage industries. "But behind that word there seemed to be a glorification of poverty," says Pandit Nehru, "God was especially the Lord of the Poor; they were his chosen people." This is the usual religious attitude everywhere. But Jawaharlal could not appreciate this. Poverty seemed to Jawaharlal a hateful thing. It was an evil to be fought and rooted out. It was not an evil to be encouraged. This inevitably led to an attack on a system which tolerated and produced poverty. Those who shrink from this demon of necessity tried to justify poverty in some way. They could not think in terms of scarcity. Nor could they picture a world abundantly supplied with the necessities of life. According to them, the rich and the poor would always be with us. No wonder, Jawaharlal could not see eye to eye with

Mahatma Gandhi:—

"Whenever I had occasion to discuss this with Gandhiji, he would lay stress on the rich treating their riches as a trust for the people; it was a view-point of considerable antiquity, and one comes across it frequently in India as well as medieval Europe. I confess that I have always been wholly unable to understand how any person can reasonably expect this to happen, or imagine that therein lies the solution of the social problem."

Time came when Pandit Jawaharlal had to share the chief responsibility of guiding the Congress policy. His name, curiously enough, was pushed forward by Gandhiji. The A. I. C. C. was somewhat taken aback by this difficult position. They finally elected the young leader as a President of the Lahore Congress in 1929. He felt "answered" and humiliated, because he was not elected in the ordinary way. He felt that he did not come by the main entrance or even a side entrance. He appeared suddenly by a trap-door. He bewildered the audience into acceptance. "They put a brave face on it," he says "and, like a necessary pill, swallowed me." His pride was hurt. Almost he felt like handing back the honour. Jawaharlal did not like this kind of statesmanship. What he did not approve in others, he certainly did not approve in himself. Jawaharlal did not approve of Mahatma Gandhiji to carry out an unstatesmanlike decision even for Jawaharlal's sake. Fortunately Pandit Nehru restrained himself. He did not want to make an exhibition. Consequently he stole away with a heavy heart.

The election of Jawaharlal was indeed a great honour. It was a great responsibility too. He was the youngest President of the Congress. He was just forty when he presided. Even at fifty-five Jawaharlal keeps up his youthful

outlook on politics. "As statesmanship has seldom been considered one of my virtues," he says, "and no one has accused me of possessing an excess of learning, I have escaped so far the accusation of age, though my hair has turned grey and my looks betray me." In spite of being an immaculate statesman, Jawaharlal has meticulously kept himself away from the tinsel traditions of a left-fingered politician.

The Lahore Congress drew near. Events marched forward. Jawaharlal felt like a cog in a great machine. The machine swept on relentlessly. The British Government took a forward step. Lord Irwin made an announcement about a forthcoming Round Table Conference. "It was an ingenious, ly-worded announcement," says Jawaharlal "which could mean much or very little." At any rate, it fell far short of the national demand. A resolution was passed by the "Leaders" in Delhi. For the Congress it was a great come-down. There was a fatal catch in it. Jawaharlal's attitude brings out an important psychological trait which at once distinguishes him from Bose and lines him up with the compromise-statesmanship of Gandhi. Thus he writes :

"I hesitated and refused to sign the manifesto (Subhas Bose had definitely refused to sign it), but as was not unusual with me, I allowed myself to be talked into signing. Even so, I came away in great distress, and the very next day I thought of withdrawing from the Congress presidency, and wrote accordingly to Gandhiji. I do not suppose that I meant this seriously, though I was sufficiently upset. A soothing letter from Gandhiji and three days of reflection calmed me."

Thus Jawaharlal is not a man of inflexible views. That is the quality of a true statesman. A man of unending policy is not a desirable creature in the modern democracy. In a world of equality we must stoop to conquer. By a stroke of chance, Jawaharlal had to preside over the National Congress

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and the Trade Union Congress within a few weeks of each other. "I hoped," he says, "that I might be a link between the two and bring them close to each other—the National Congress to become more socialistic, more proletarian, and organized labour to join the national struggle."

The Lahore Congress remains a vivid patch in the memory of Jawaharlal. He occupied the centre of the stage and played a leading role. Noble emotions filled him during those crowded days. The people of Lahore gave him a magnificent welcome. "I knew well, he writes "that this overflowing enthusiasm was for a symbol and an idea, not for me personally; yet it was no little thing for a person to become that symbol, even for a while, in the eyes and hearts of great numbers of people." This is an important psychological trait of our hero. Jawaharlal the man has studiously tried to keep himself away from Jawaharlal the statesman. He is one of the fewest politicians who can view themselves dispassionately. Once he wrote an excellent skit upon himself, which has been briefly quoted in the chapter headlined *The Socialist Gentleman*.

The main resolution of Independence was passed almost unanimously in the Lahore Congress. The Pakistan resolution—the greatest counter-attack on independence—was also passed at Lahore, ten years after, by the Muslim League. Thus Lahore has played a very baffling part in the destiny of India. But Lahore has always honoured Nehru more than any other leader, including Mahatma Gandhi. Lahore has always been proud of the young leader. The practical commonsense of Jawaharlal has had held a particular enchantment for the sturdy Punjabi youth. Unlike Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal has done nothing that nation might be sorry for. There is nothing to reflect upon his integrity. There is nothing to comment upon him. Jawaharlal unlike Gandhi, does not accept blank cheques from the capitalists, for h Mahatma G



has always been almost notorious. Jawaharlal is a friend of the underdog as Mahatma Gandhi ; but Jawaharlal does not claim to be a friend of the capitalists, as Mahatma Gandhi does. Gandhi is known for begging money, but Jawaharlal is not even a romantic beggar. All these things are weighed by the Punjab youth who have an honest contempt for saintly politics. Gandhiji is weighed in the balance by the Sword Arm of India and found wanting. The Pandit scores heavily upon the Mahatma in the Land of the Five rivers. Were he to become a general, he would find any number of willing volunteers across the Sutlej. Under different conditions might well he have been the Boliviari of the Punjab.

Nevertheless Mahatma Gandhi holds the field. He cannot be ousted from his place of vantage. Jawaharlal can only be at best a brilliant lieutenant. He vividly describes the magnetic influence of Gandhiji. In the Lahore Congress, the main resolution was carried through without much ado. The real hitch was in the form of an amendment. Thus he writes magically :

" This amendment was defeated and the voting figures were announced and the main resolution declared carried, by a curious coincidence, at the stroke of midnight on December 31st, as the old year yielded place to the new. Thus even as the year of grace, fixed by the Calcutta Congress expired, the new decision was taken and preparations for the struggle launched. The wheels had been set moving, but we were still in darkness as to how and when we were to begin. The All-India Congress Committee had been authorised to plan and carry out our campaign, but all knew that the real decision lay with Gandhiji."

The real decision lay with Gandhiji. It always lies there. Gandhiji is the custodian of the conscience of the people. Jawaharlal Nehru at best can play but a second fiddle. We

shall never know the true statesmanship of Nehru while Gandhi dominates the political arena ; but while Gandhiji hopes to live for one hundred and twenty-five years, Jawaharlal entertains no such roseate hopes. On the other hand, Pandit Nehru continually lashes himself to death in a matchless fury for the country's cause. Perhaps the world shall never know the young statesman—young even at his best in the political theatre of this unfortunate country.

Jawaharlal has grasped the psychology of the Pathan races better than any other Congress Statesman outside the Frontier. Thus he describes his impressions :—

“ In Lahore for the first time a large batch of earnest young men from the frontier came into touch with all-India political currents. Their fresh minds were impressed, and they returned with a sense of unity with the rest of India in the struggle for freedom and full of enthusiasm for it. They were simple but effective men of action, less given to talk and quibbling than the people of any other province in India, and they started organising their people and spreading the new ideas. They met with success and the men and women of the Frontier, the latest to join in India's struggle, played an outstanding and remarkable part from 1930 onwards.”

No doubt the Pathans got their first spark from the presidential address of Jawaharlal. He lit up their dormant nationalism. It is more probable than otherwise that the Lahore Congress brought the Frontier folk within the fold of the Indian National Congress. No wonder, the name of Jawaharlal is a household word across the Indus. Being a citizen of the Frontier, I know the Pathan psychology as well as anybody else. There it is customary for the Pathans to speak of “ Nehru and Gandhi ” rather than “ Gandhi and Nehru.” The first name shows the greater respect and reverence.

Jawaharlal always thinks in terms of nationalism as an engineer thinks in length and breadth. He noticed once that hundreds of thousands of men and women were continually streaming into Allahabad as pilgrims for the 'Magh. Mela. He mused like an engineer :

"As I watched these great crowds and the unending streams of people going to and from the river, I wondered how they would react to the call for civil resistance and peaceful direct action. How many of them knew or cared for the Lahore decisions? How amazingly powerful was that faith which had for thousands of years brought them and their followers from every corner of India to bathe in the holy Ganges! Could they not divert some of this tremendous energy to political and economic action to better their own lot? Or were their minds too full of the trappings and traditions of their religion to leave room for other thoughts? I knew, of course, that these other thoughts were already there, stirring the placid stillness of ages. It was the moment of these vague ideas and desires among the masses that had caused the upheavals of the past dozen years and had changed the face of India. There was no doubt about their existence and of the dynamic energy behind them. But still doubt came and questions arose to which there was no immediate answer. How far had these ideas spread? What strength lay behind them, what capacity for organised action, for long endurance?"

Those are questions put by an astute statesman. It is the voice of pure-hearted nationalism. These sentiments are impossible for the stifled soul of Mr. Jinnah. These outpourings of soul reveal the very core of constructive statesmanship. These seething millions induce an element of profound depression and rightly so, in Jawaharlal. "My reputation as a hero is entirely a bogus one," he says, "and

I do not feel at all heroic, and generally the heroic attitude or the dramatic pose in life strikes me as silly."

Civil Disobedience restarted in 1930. It revealed the earnest and enthusiastic mood of the country. The pledge of independence was taken on January 26th, 1930. *Satyagraha* electrified the atmosphere. "Salt," says Nehru, "suddenly became a mysterious word, a word of power. The Salt Tax was to be attacked, the salt laws were to be broken. We were bewildered and could not quite fit in a national struggle with common salt." The Dandi Salt March commenced. People followed the fortunes of this marching column of pilgrims. The temperature of the country went up. During this *Satyagraha* the father of Jawaharlal made the gift of his house to the nation. It was renamed Swaraj Bhawan. Our hero was arrested and found himself safely lodged in Naini Central Prison. After an exciting life he felt rather lonely and depressed. He was tired out. For three days he slept heartily. "My bed was heavily chained-up," he writes in one of his lighter moods, "lest I might take it up and walk away." More probably, it was to avoid the bed being used as a kind of scaling ladder to climb the wall of the enclosure. The nights were full of strange noises. The convict overseers guarded the main walls. "At times I felt," he says, "as if I was on the verge of the forest, and the peasantry were shouting to keep the wild animals away from their fields; sometimes it seemed the forest itself and the beasts of the night were keeping up the nocturnal chorus." Jawaharlal has no doubt a wonderfully sensitive soul, capable of understanding the feelings of other people.

Jawaharlal came out of the jail in October 1930. Both economic and political conditions seemed to be crying out for a non-tax campaign. People went on going into the jail, but the sting had gone out of the atmosphere. The

leaders and the middle classes were a bit tired. Something was needed to liven things up. A fresh infusion of blood was necessary. "Where could this come from except from the peasantry?" says Nehru, "and the reserve stocks there were enormous." It could once again become a mass movement. It will touch the vital interests of the masses. It would raise vital issues. A no-tax campaign was decided upon. Jawaharlal gave the movement a push. "I felt," he says, "that I had done a good first day's work after release from gaol." He added to it a big mass meeting at Allahabad. No wonder, he was convicted again. After 'eight days' absence, at the stroke of nine in the evening, he entered the great gate of Naini prison again.

The re-arrest of Jawaharlal had some effect on the tempo of the civil disobedience. It put on a little spurt. His father had a slightly unpleasant shock.

"Almost immediately he pulled himself together and banged a table in front of him, saying that he had made up his mind to be an invalid no longer. He was going to be well and to do a man's job, and not to submit weakly to illness. It was a brave resolve, but unhappily no strength of will could overcome and crush that deep-seated disease that was eating into him. Yet for a few days it worked a marked change, to the surprise of those who saw him. For some months past, ever since he was at Yervada, he had been bringing up blood in his sputum. This stopped quite suddenly after this resolve, and for some days it did not appear."

During this interval Motilal worked with his old ardour. He gave a push to the civil disobedience movement all over India. He conferred with many people from various places. He issued detailed instructions. He fixed the birthday of Jawaharlal in November for an all-India celebration. He offered passages from his speeches, for which he had long

convicted, were read out at public meetings. On that day there were numerous *lathi* charges. On that day alone about five thousand arrests were made all over the country. No doubt, a unique birthday celebration of the young statesman! The wife of Jawaharlal followed him to prison on the New Year's Day 1931. "I am happy beyond measure," said Kamla, "and proud to follow in the footsteps of my husband. I hope the people will keep the flag flying." Thus Jawaharlal had the co-operation of the entire family. And that is the chief secret of his thundering success in politics. There is no doubt that Pandit Nehru has risen to the position of a supreme statesmanship on the shoulders of his father. His father passed away on February 6th, 1931. "I am going soon, Mahatmaji," he had told Gandhiji previously "and I shall not be here to see Swaraj. But I know that you have won it and will soon have it." It is difficult to say whether he meant a moral victory or a real victory. The former Gandhiji did win, but the latter still escapes our grasp like will-o'-the-wisp.

Jawaharlal Nehru made a very correct estimate of the First Round Table Conference. The Indian delegates did not play a noble part. "Our liberal friends in India," he says, 'have always seemed to me to attach more importance to private talks and gossips with and about high officials than to principles or the realities of the Indian situation.' They talked of intrigues behind the scenes, of what Lord So-and-So said or Sir Somebody did in private. Mahatma Gandhi, says Jawaharlal, alone can speak for India :—

"Whether Gandhiji is a democrat or not, he does represent the peasant masses of India; he is the quintessence of the conscious and subconscious will of those millions. It is perhaps something more than representation; for, he is the idealised personification of those vast millions. Of course,

he is not the average peasant.....And yet withal he is the great peasant, with a peasant's outlook on affairs, and with a peasant's blindness to some aspects of life. But India is peasant India, and so he knows his India well and reacts to her highest tremors, and gauges a situation accurately and almost instinctively, and has a knack of acting at the psychological moment.

This is a remarkable tribute from a brilliant lieutenant to his brilliant commander-in-chief. After the Gandhi-Irwin Pact, Mahatma Gandhi attended the Second Round Table Conference as the sole representative of the Indian National Congress. "There was no question of success or failure at this Round Table Conference itself," says Nehru. "Little was expected of it, and yet it made a difference." Jawaharlal makes a statesmanlike comment on the Conference :—

"The Conference itself with all its scheming and opportunism and futile meanderings was no failure for India. It was constituted so as to fail, and the people of India could hardly be made responsible for its failing. But it succeeded, in diverting world attention from real issues in India, and in India itself, it produced disillusion and depression and a sense of humiliation. It gave a handle to reactionary forces to raise their heads again. Success or failure was to come to the people of the country by events in India itself."

This is a remarkable appreciation of the true condition of things. No wonder, Mahatmaji returned to India empty-handed. If nothing was brought, nothing was expected by those who were in the know of things. By the time Gandhiji returned to India, the Government had already made a good harvest of arrests and Pandit Nehru was already behind the bars.

Jawaharlal has a sensitive affection for the honour of the National Flag. Again and again there are typical

passages in his writings which lead one to think that no one can be a trusty patriot unless he is prepared to sacrifice his all for the honour of the National Flag. The following is but one of the typical examples :—

“ One feature of these early months pained me greatly. This was the hauling down of our National Flag by various Municipalities and public bodies, and especially by the Calcutta Corporation which was said to have a majority of Congress members. The flag was taken down under pressure from the police and the Government which threatened severe action in case of non-compliance. This action would have probably meant a suspension of the municipality or punishment of its members. Organizations with vested interests are likely to be timid, and perhaps it was inevitable that they should act as they did, but nevertheless it hurt. The flag had become a symbol to us of much that we held dear, and under its shadow we had taken many a pledge to protect its honour. To pull it down with our both hands, or to have it pulled down at our behest, seemed not only a breaking of that pledge but almost a sacrilege. It was a submission of the spirit, a denial of the truth in one ; an affirmation, in the face of the superior physical might, of the false. And those who submitted in this way lowered the morale of the nation, and injured its self-respect.”

For Jawaharlal the National Flag represents the very spirit of the nation. A man who does not respect the national flag cannot be a nationalist. A National Flag is the symbol of national strength. No other Indian nationalist, including Mahatma Gandhi has Jawaharlal's sense of reverence for the National Flag. The National Flag is for Nehru what God is for Gandhi, because Pandit Nehru believes in no divinity higher than patriotism.



## CHAPTER VI

## From Round Table to "Quit India"

The failure of the Round Table Conference was a victory for British imperialism. Also it was the death of India's hopes in the professions of the Labour Government. Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, like Sir Stafford Cripps, played into the hands of the British diehards like Mr. Winston Churchill. It is remarkable that even at that time Mr. Churchill advocated a theory of blood-and-iron for governing the downtrodden people of India. On his conduct (or rather misconduct!) during the Round Table Conference, I wrote the following doggerel in December 1931 :—

## CHURCHILL

Keep India on the deck,  
May she ring our knell,  
I'll catch her by the neck  
And make her quite well.

## MACDONALD

I consent, but you will  
Show to thy brothers :  
"Church" which itself is "ill",  
How can it heal others?

I was a schoolboy at that time, but it is clear that I understood Mr. Churchill. I called him "Ill-Church." Experience of the subsequent years has proved that I had hit the nail on the head. Churchillism has all the years been the greatest danger to the British Nation and the British Commonwealth of Nations. It has become an institution, the religion of British Imperialism.

The failure of the Round Table Conference was a very good lesson for Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. He linked up the

Indian struggle with that of the world. The events in the world were moving at a brisk pace. His gaze wandered off to the East and the West. Nippon was strangling China in the Far East. Social Democracy was on its last legs in Europe. Pandit Nehru raised his voice against Fascism, Imperialism and the vested interests of the capitalists. His articles written in 1933 and entitled *Whither India?* are a profound study of the Indian problem. He declared that Imperialism and Capitalism are the two deadly enemies of India. He makes an interesting reference to the influence of capitalism in India. There are two kinds of capitalistic forces, he says: "There are the interests of the foreign capital and those of the home capital. The nationalist answer is to prefer home interest to foreign interests, but beyond that it does not go." The nationalists try to avoid disturbing class divisions. The social *status quo* is being temporarily kept up. It is hopefully imagined that class interests will be amicably accommodated when the country is once free. "Being essentially a middle-class movement, nationalism works chiefly in the interests of that class."

Jawaharlal is confident that the world to-day is richer than it has ever been before. It is the capitalistic regime that is egging out artificial famines. He predicted only early collapse of the capitalistic system of economic life. And here he uttered a sentence which is a psychological reminder of his deeply poetic nature: "Whatever the future may bring, one thing is certain, that the old order has gone and all the king's horses and all the king's men will not set it up again." There is no doubt that Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru was fond of nursery rhymes and the verses continued to ring in his soul long after he had left the portal of the school at Harrow. He might as well have said:

"Whate'er the future may bring,  
There's certain one thing,  
The old order is gone,

And all the king's horses and all the king's men  
Will not set it up again."

If we get into the mind of Pandit Nehru through the nursery key, he is obviously comparing capitalistic regime to humpty-dumpty and its security to that of an egg standing precariously on the edge of the wall, from which place if once it falls all the imperialistic forces will not be able to repair the broken capitalistic egg.

The years 1932—35 were the years of Hitler terror in Germany. Some of the greatest intellectuals of Germany were in prison at that time and some of the greatest intellectuals of India were also behind the prison bars, and they were all there because they were enemies of Fascism, although they were locked up by Government with altogether different professions. The British Bureaucracy, while opposing Fascism abroad, was fain to practise Fascism at home. No wonder, Pandit Nehru fell a victim to British imperialism and throughout 1932—35, he was practically in prison. He was not alone in a British jail. His whole family had gone behind the British bars. Mrs. Motilal Nehru, perhaps for the first time, saw the inside of a British prison, and that too in her advancing years, but she had a stout heart like her husband, Pandit Motilal Nehru. The latter was no more on earth, otherwise he would certainly have been by the side of his wife and his son. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's sister and his brother-in-law R. S. Pandit were also there as "guests" of His Majesty's Government. The wife of our hero Kamla Nehru struck everybody with astonishment. With a frail body and a failing health she braved the rigours of imprisonment.

Kamla Nehru went from bad to worse. She was suffering from tuberculosis and her condition became so bad in 1935 that she had to be released. Jawaharlal Nehru was also set at liberty. He flew with his wife to the German health-

resort of Badenweiller. When her health showed a slight improvement, he paid a visit to England on October 30, 1935. He was received warmly and he addressed several gatherings. During his second visit on January 28, 1936 he did some plain-speaking in London. He told the representatives of the Press that those who termed themselves as political experts in the Parliament were hopelessly ignorant of the conditions prevailing in India. The problems facing India were entirely different from what an average Briton considered them to be. It was extraordinary here, said Nehru, that even the Secretary of State for India was ignorant of the history of India. One of the biggest problem in India was unemployment and this was being altogether ignored by those who were responsible for the destiny of the country. The Constitution Act could not move their little finger towards the solution of this problem. Nothing was being done to lighten the burden of heavy revenue from off the poor peasant's back. Industrial development was being officially discouraged. All shades of opinion in India were tooth and nail against the Constitution Act, because it had ignored the very rudiments of nationalism. There was not a shadow of doubt that the Constitution could not be worked out and nothing would be gained by putting it into operation. Thus Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru carried on an incessant hammering of new constitution, but nevertheless he failed to scratch the British Lion. "The new India Act," said Nehru, "is a constant irritation for revolt. If it remained, there could be no peace for India." But John Bull paid no heed. John Bull went on as if nothing had happened.

While Pandit Nehru was carrying out a hammering propaganda in London, he was elected president of the Indian National Congress and thus he was invested with real authority to speak on behalf of India. It was a time when the world was faced with serious problems, and Pandit Nehru was the fittest man in India to shoulder the responsibility at this criti-

cal juncture. He wanted India to range itself along with other progressive forces of the world. No doubt, his election to Congress Presidentship added weight to his utterances in London. The *New Chronicle* declared that he was an extremist and his election was harmful to the cause of India. The *Manchester Guardian* passed a correct verdict. "Pandit Nehru it said, "oddly enough, though a socialist does not as yet belong to the Congress Socialist Group, but is in general agreement with its aims and is understood to be opposed to constitution. The Socialists are not expected to form more than a sixth or so of the total delegates to the Congress and a majority decision to accept office seems certain. Pandit Nehru can hardly enjoy authority having to voice the Congress decision in a policy with which he strongly disagrees. He can, however, console himself with the thought that the Socialist permeation as a whole will be advanced by tenure of his office." Nothing detrimental to the policy of Pandit Nehru took place in the Congress. His views were vigorously supported at Faizpur as well as at Lucknow Sessions of the Congress. The constitution was hacked to pieces by merciless critics, rejected powerfully, and opposed tooth and nail.

Jawaharlal's excellent exposition of communalism for the benefit of the British public deserves profound attention of every well-wisher of India. It is so authentic that it deserves to be better known than it is. "The communal problem," he said, "is not a religious problem : it has almost nothing to do with religion. It is partly an economic problem and partly a middle class problem in a large political sense. It practically came into existence in the last twenty-five or thirty years. It grew specially in the last fifteen years or so. But there is far more religious bitterness in Northern Ireland than there is in India. Not one of the communal groups touches the problem of masses. They are all interested in the problem of jobs. They want to get more jobs. The idea of power coming in

the hands of the people under Constitutional Acts had led middle class people to think in terms of getting spoils and patronage. I do not think it is a very difficult problem to solve. If social and economic issues come to the point, the communal problem falls into background. My outlook is economic whereas yours—I mean of the British political leaders—is political. There cannot be a simple solution of the complicated problem of India. The balance of social forces from time to time has got to be realized. Since the Congress came on the scene, the Indian peasantry is influencing the Congress which is no doubt controlled by middle class. As an organization it has no consistent economic philosophy, but it is tending to divide on economic and nationalist lines—the Left and Right wings of the Congress. A few years ago the Congress passed a resolution on social reforms. You may call it a weak and watery approach to socialism but that was the first approach."

All this time Kamla Nehru's health was going from bad to worse. Bravely she carried on a struggle against death. At last her frail body gave way and she shuffled off the mortal coil on February 25, 1936. The entire country was plunged in mourning. "Kamla Nehru's death is a national loss," said Mahatma Gandhi. Pt. Nehru flew back to India on March 11, 1936. "The vast and abundant affection of my countrymen," he said, "has enveloped me and given me strength and courage."

Pandit Nehru's address at Lucknow Session of the Congress is a landmark in India's struggle for freedom. He said: "Capitalism in its difficulties took to Fascism, with all its brutal suppression of what western civilization had apparently stood for; it became in some of its homelands, what its imperialist counterpart had long been in the subject countries. Fascism and Imperialism thus stood as the two faces of the now decaying capitalism, and though they varied

in different countries according to national characteristics and economic and political conditions, they represented the same forces of reaction and supported each other for such conflict, which was inherent in their very nature. Socialism in the West and the rising nationalism of the Eastern and other dependent countries opposed this combination of Fascism and Imperialism. Nationalism in the East, it must be remembered, was essentially different from the new and terribly narrow nationalism of Fascist countries, the former was the historical urge for freedom, the latter the last refuge of reaction."

It was decided that the elections should be fought, but the question of office acceptance should be decided after the elections. A special session of All-India Congress Committee should be held for that. Pandit Nehru did not favour immediate civil disobedience; but also he was not in favour of relaxing the political effort. "We cannot rest," he said, "for rest is betrayal of the cause we have espoused, the pledge we have taken, it is betrayal of the millions who never rest." This is characteristic of Nehru's psychology of restlessness.

Jawaharlal Nehru's reference to Socialism raised a storm in the tea-cup. The vested interests every where were up in arms against him. Mr. A. D. Shroff of the Tatas took up the cudgels. Pandit Nehru accepted the gauntlet. "Society is turning towards Socialism though gradually," he said, "and whether Mr. Shroff and his handful of followers were likely to come within the fold or not, events at present indicate beyond doubt the revolution could come if evolution were not sped up."

Pandit Nehru made a tour of the Punjab in August, 1936. Thousands of people heard him. "The Punjab," he said, "is an astonishing province. Sometimes it seems as it were a stumbling block in the way of India's progress and freedom, forgetful of the great issues before the country and lost in petty

squabbles, at other times its eyes light up a fire with enthusiasm and its strong arms stretch out in yearning for the freedom from which we have been so long parted. Almost it seems that it is destined to blaze a trail for others to follow." Jawaharlal found that the peasants were not interested in political squabbles. Communal Award or Federation were Greek to them. Pandit Nehru referred to them as "the volcano that shakes with inner fire." He took the message of Socialism to the far-flung villages of the Pnnjab.

The Congress embarked on its election campaign in August, 1936. An election manifesto was issued by the Working Committee. The country was saturated with the utterances of Jawaharlal Nehru. He affirmed the Karachi Congress Resolution about fundamental rights of citizenship. "For vast millions of our countrymen," the manifesto stated, "the problem of achieving independence has become an urgent one, for only independence can give us power to end the exploitation of our masses." The Constitution Act and the federal scheme were rejected. The All-India Congress Committee endorsed the manifesto. It also clarified the Congress attitude about Communal Award. It passed a resolution condemning the Award. Previously the attitude of the Congress was one of neutrality. Now individual members of the Congress were permitted to carry out a campaign against the Award. Pandit Nehru undertook long election tours in the country. He declared that there were two forces at work: those who wanted to keep up the *status quo* and those who opposed the *status quo*. The one was determined to end the present order, the other would simply mend it. He did not want the Congress to beg for votes. It was the duty of the people to respond automatically.

A campaign was set afoot for the re-election of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru as President of the Indian National Congress.



Pandit Nehru personally was not in favour of the third term, but there was a wide demand for his re-election in the country. His re-election was voiced everywhere. He was the only man of the moment who could keep unity between the rank and file of the Congress. And unity was supreme need of the hour. "Clashes of ideals," he said, "are welcome but we should not allow united front to be destroyed." The call for unity rallied all schools of thought round the Congress flag. Even Gandhiji supported his presidentship. "Jawaharlal is the man of the hour," said Gandhi. And a man of the moment no doubt he was.

Pandit Nehru was not flattered to shoulder the burden. The unique honour did not dazzle him. But there was a great work to be done. And Nehru alone could do it. "We have worked for the dawn," he said, "but the long night continues. We have to keep the torch burning to light the path." Thus he was re-elected for the third time on December 11, 1936. The Faizpur Session was approaching near. Also it was the eve of the elections to Provincial Legislatures. The air was thick with propaganda and counter-propaganda. The voice of Pandit Nehru rang out at Faizpur. It was echoed all over the country. Freedom was the real issue. All other issues paled before it. Pandit Nehru was critical of British foreign policy. The British Government was giving rather too long a tether to Hitler and also helping in the dismemberment of Spain from the forces of democracy. "In Spain," said Nehru, "our battles are being fought and we watch this struggle not merely with the sympathy of outsiders, but with the painful anxiety of those who are themselves involved in it." Can there be a stronger voice of internationalism? Pandit Nehru is not merely a lukewarm internationalist, he is a citizen of the world in thought, in word and in deed. He believes that Socialism alone can determine the

future of mankind. "The Congress stands for democracy," he said, "but logic of events would lead it to Socialism." Thus it was a fighting speech that Pandit Nehru chose to deliver at Faizpur. He was fighting relentlessly on the side of world democracy. His personality towered above all others. No wonder, Mahatma Gandhi declared, "I can assure you that I feel confident that Jawaharlal would mount the scaffold if Indian freedom needs it."

With such helmsman as Pandit Nehru, no wonder the Congress swept the polls in seven provinces. The All-India Convention was held at Delhi. It consisted of all the Congress M.L.A.'s. Pandit Nehru sent a stirring message to them. It was decided to step into the political offices and to make the best of a very bad bargain, although Pandit Nehru was personally not in favour of such a move. He asked the M.L.A.'s to treat their victory as a verdict against the constitution. The work of the Congress, he believed, lay outside the legislatures in mobilising the masses for the final conquest of the imperial citadel. Office acceptance was only a passing phase, and Pandit Nehru preferred to abide by the majority decision instead of forcing his decision on the majority.

Pandit Nehru carried the message of the Congress to the Muslim peasants. Congress had failed to win many seats among the Muslims during the last elections. Pandit Nehru believed that it was due to the fact that the Congress had long neglected work among the Muslim masses. Jinnah encouraged that policy. Jinnah believed that all non-Muslim League organizations should keep their hands off the Muslim masses. No wonder, Pandit Nehru crossed swords with Mr. Jinnah. The "hands-off" the Muslims was not acceptable to Pandit Nehru. He carried on some controversial correspondence with the Quaid-e-Azam. Statements were issued from both sides.

"I have had vast Muslim audiences in the Punjab and elsewhere," wrote Nehru. "They did not ask me about the Communal problem or percentages or separate electorates. They were interested in burdens of land revenue or rent or debt, or water rates, of unemployment and many other burdens." The Muslim League has never given thought to these problems.

"What does the Muslim League stand for?" asked Nehru. "Does it stand for the independence of India, for anti-imperialism? I believe not. It represents a group of Muslims, no doubt highly estimable persons, but functioning in the higher regions of the upper middle classes and having no contacts with Muslim masses and few even with the lower middle classes."

Pandit Nehru found that both the Muslim and Hindu peasants had alike problems. They both were targets of poverty. How could the Congress speak for Hindu peasant and neglect the Muslim peasants? In order to know the peasantry Pandit Nehru visited Malaya and Burma in May, 1937. The Indian settlers in Malaya are poor labourers. Occupied with a life-and-death struggle for existence, they are being exploited by merciless capitalists. In Burma he found friction between the Indians and the Burmese. He advised them to keep united, because Burma is a part of India and cannot be chopped off by a paper decision at Westminster. He told them to hold fast to the vision of freedom and don't let their united strength fritter itself away in futile bickerings engineered by the self-interested bureaucracy to the detriment of both.

Early in 1938, the Congress Cabinet met at Bombay. The work of the Congress Ministries was reviewed. There were hints of crisis between the Congress and the Government. The release of political prisoners was at issue. The attitude of the bureaucracy was inflexible. The Congress was firm in its determination. The die was cast. In February 1938 the Bihar

and U. P. Ministries resigned. "We may be heading towards crisis." Pandit Nehru warned the nationalists all over the country. "Keep your knapsacks on your backs." But the Government found wisdom in giving away. And the crisis was averted. Subhas Chander Bose was elected president of the Haripura Session of the Congress.

In July 1938 Pandit Nehru visited Spain. He was greatly stirred by the epic struggle of the Spanish people. He landed at Marseilles and proceeded to Barcelona, which was gay and quiet in spite of the war, and the children laughed what Stephen Spender calls "the Bombed Laughter." There were some raids there during the stay of Pandit Nehru at Barcelona. He was able to see the havoc played by the Nazi and Fascist bombers. He met Passionaria the great woman leader and other heroes of the dying republic. Del-vayo, the foreign minister, told him of the state of famine in Spain. Pandit Nehru on his return to India despatched a ship-load of food to Spain with the co-operation of the people as an appreciation of the heroic struggle of the Spanish Nation to keep up the spirit of democracy in the face of heavy odds.

When Czechoslovakia was chopped off to quench the lust of Hitler, Pandit Nehru was at Geneva. Czechoslovakia was betrayed. And Pandit Nehru heard the betrayal from the lips of Mr. Chamberlain. It was a bare-faced admission. Pandit Nehru felt keenly about it. He did not approve of the Prime Minister's weak-kneed policy. "The time has passed for minor remedies," said Nehru, "and the world rushes to catastrophe. We may yet avert this if the progressive forces of the world were together. India can play her part in this company, but only a free India can do so."

Early in 1939 trouble broke out in Indian States. Saddled with a feudal government, the position of the people in the

States is very tragic. Now the pent-up emotions of centuries burst out. Pt. Nehru came forward to put his shoulder to the wheel of this momentous problem. The trouble broke out at Jaipur and spread over to Rajkot, the homeland of Gandhiji. Both the States yielded to the Congress demand. In other States also people mobilized their strength against princedom and the princely order. An All-India States' Peoples' Conference was called at Ludhiana. Pandit Nehru was elected President of the Conference. There are about six hundred States in India and they were represented at the Conference. About one lakh of people witnessed the two-mile long procession of Pandit Nehru.

"They differ greatly among themselves," said Nehru, "and some have advanced industrially and educationally and some have competent rulers or ministers. The majority of them, however, are sinks of reaction and incompetence, and unrest, and trained autocratic power, sometimes exercised by vicious and degraded individuals. But whether the ruler happens to be good or bad, or his ministers competent or incompetent, the evil lies in the system. This system has vanished from India also long ago. But in spite of its manifest decay and stagnation it has been propped up and artificially maintained by British imperialism. Offspring of British Power in India, sucked by imperialism for its own purposes it has survived till to-day, though mighty revolutions have shaken the world and changed it, empires have collapsed and crowns of princes and petty rulers have faded away. The system has no inherent importance or strength, for it is the strength of British imperialism that counts. For us in India, that system has in reality been one of the faces of imperialism. Therefore, when conflict comes we must recognise who our opponent is."

The World War Number Two broke out in Europe in September 1939. Pandit Nehru saw the British game of

setting Germany and Russia by the ears. "Russia and America," he predicted six months before the war, "wield an immense power. A combination of Britain, France, Russia and America would be invincible. But it was not the policy of Britain and France to combine with Russia lest their coalition with Russia might lead to the spreading of new ideas from Russia in countries like India." Now when the war broke out, the Congress wanted to know the war aims of Britain and France. "India has nothing to do with the war," it declared, "if it is aimed at defending the *status quo* of imperialist possessions. If it is for democracy, we will defend it."

India was dragged into the war without consulting its representatives. The Nationalist India resented it. Since the British Government failed to explain their war aims, the Congress resigned from Ministries all over the country. Individual *Satyagraha* was launched. Sir Stafford Cripps came to India, when Japan was battering at our gates, but he failed to deliver goods as an angel of mercy. In talks with Sir Stafford Cripps the Congress was represented by Jawaharlal Nehru and Maulana Azad.

The All-India Congress Committee passed a vigorous resolution against the British Government and their half-hearted approach to India, through Sir Stafford Cripps, which "lead to great bitterness and distrust of that Government." It has refused "to part with power" and does not recognise the Independence of India. The Indian interests, the British safety and the world peace require that Britain must abandon hold on India.

"The A. I. C. C. is convinced," ran the resolution, "that India will attain her freedom through her own strength and will retain it."

## CHAPTER VII

### China and "Quit India"

Pandit Nehru has always acted as an unofficial ambassador of China. Of all the peoples of the world he has felt most magnetically drawn towards that down-trodden infant republic. He has the same sympathy towards China which a suffering man has towards a suffering brother. Even in the most turbulent days of 1942 did he never forget the plight of John Chinaman even for a moment. Looking across the horizons of India, Jawaharlal has heaved a sigh of painful helplessness, because Mother India is unable to help others unless she is able to help her own children first. Pandit Nehru expounded this point sadly on February 6, 1942, at Cawnpore.

"We cannot shut our eyes to the bloodshed that is going on all over the world, and to the loss of human lives which is taking place on account of the present war," observed Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru opening the 19th Session of the All-India Trade Union Congress held this afternoon under the Presidentship of Mr. V. R. Kalappa. Pandit Nehru said, India was not responsible for the good of any other country. The first concern of Indians was to see that their country was free.

Pandit Nehru said : "India's premier organisation had expressed its sympathies towards other countries like China and Russia, but now the first question before them was the freedom of India." And India would not yield to British Imperialism. Proceeding further Pandit Nehru said that

in case India was free, she would have decided by her own will to move side by side with Britain. But at this stage the country had no other alternative but to fight with all those who ever tried to keep her in slavery. He added that he totally disliked the German rule and Nazism. Britain had made India incapable of any defence. In the event of India being attacked by any other foreign country she would continue to resist. She was fated to oppose all until she was free.

Pandit Nehru further pointed out that India would have developed industrially if she was free, but the British Government never allowed her to industrialise and placed handicaps in the work of the National Planning Committee, of which he was the President.

In conclusion he paid tributes to Cawnpore for its contribution in the *Satyagraha* movement. He urged the Trade Union Congress to take decision on matters which affected the working class. He was of the opinion that any decision taken against the will of the country would create divisions and prove disastrous.

On February 11, 1942, Pandit Nehru delivered a speech, addressing a mammoth meeting in Delhi, welcoming Madame and Generalissimo Chiang Kai-Shek on their visit to India. While talking about China, he could not forget that India was politically worse than China. "India," he said, "will not accept any other rule, Japanese or German, but only the rule of the masses of India."

Pandit Nehru said that we would not bend before any power and would face any aggression, whatever might come to threaten us.

Welcoming Madame and General Chiang Kai-Shek and their colleagues, Pandit Nehru said: "I only feel one



thing that we are not in a position to accord them a reception such as we would wish to, as we are not free.

"On the arrival of Generalissimo in Delhi, I found a whisper that we are going to change our policy, but this is not a fact. Our decisions are made after mature thought; we never decide anything in a hurry. Responsible bodies can never decide anything in a hurry, or, without going into the details, as the fate of millions of our countrymen is behind such decision.

"The world is passing through an ocean of revolution and nobody knows what is going to happen to it at the end."

"Nobody knew if the coming changes would be for the good or for the worse, but it was certain they would never shirk their responsibility, but would take the reins of power in their hands any time in whatever condition they might be."

"We could never afford to forget our discipline and run away when any trouble comes."

In a speech delivered at Calcutta on February 21, 1942, Pandit Nehru exhorted his countrymen to follow the heroic example of China. We should not yield to any type of imperialism whatsoever. We must face Italian Fascism and German Nazism as well as British Imperialism. In order to get rid of one, we should not ask aid of the other. That is a dangerous pitfall which we must avoid at any cost whatsoever. Therein lies the danger. If any one of us thinks like that, he is a coward. "Why should we think," he said, "in terms of some outsider ruling India?" And there he warned India lest we fall into the glittering promises of the Japanese and go off the thorny path of freedom. He told his countrymen to remember the sacrifices of China on the altar of democracy.

"Let us be brave, take courage from the example of Chinese brothers and sisters and face any oppressor, any aggressor, face any person, who dares think in terms of oppressing or dictating to India," observed Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, addressing a huge public meeting held at Shradhdhanand Park. The meeting, which was held under the auspices of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee, was one of the biggest held in the city in recent years.

"Let us preserve our unity, forget our petty differences, work under the programme that has been put forward by the Congress, build it up and see that its structure is kept intact," added Pandit Nehru.

The speaker continued: "I have come this time to Calcutta on a very special mission as you know, because Generalissimo Chiang Kai-Shek and Madame Chiang Kai-Shek happened to come to Calcutta. I wanted very much to be of such service to them as I could be, while they were on the Indian soil.

"It was a sorrow to me, and I have no doubt to you, that their visit to India to which we have looked forward so much and which has been a great honour for us, should have taken place in such circumstances, and that many of you have been unable to see them, even from a distance.

"We would have liked to honour them and honour through them China which they have led so magnificently. We have failed to honour them in public and in many other ways. Nevertheless, it has been a great honour to India and it has been, I think, something that will affect, if I may say so, the history of India and China. It has really been a historic visit, historic in the sense that it will mark a new epoch in the relations of India and China. For my part, for long years have dreamt that India and China should hold together, in the present and also in the future, and I went to Chungking with that hope in my mind and

when I got there I found that the leaders of China were anxious themselves to develop the relations between India and China. I rejoiced and was happy because I saw the future, in which India and China would go hand in hand. "I am quite definite that there could be no peace or solution of the world's problems unless the problems of India and China were solved, because primarily India and China are huge parts of the earth's surface and they comprise nearly half the total population of the world. It is absurd to imagine that the world's problems—economic or political—could be solved unless India's and China's problems were solved."

Paying a tribute to Marshal Chiang Kai-Shek, Pandit Nehru said: "The Generalissimo is a very remarkable man and has proved himself a very great leader and captain in war. His is one of the very few names that will stand out prominently in the world to-day. Far greater as a captain in war, he has proved himself a leader of men. To-day if you go to China you will find no group or individual who will not agree in one thing and that is that Marshal Chiang Kai-Shek is not only a very great leader, but the only possible leader that China could have."

Referring to Madame Chiang Kai-Shek, Pandit Nehru said that this great consort of the Marshal had not only been his partner in his life's journey, but had been a fellow warrior with him, who had donned armour to stand side by side with him in China's battle for freedom. She had become the symbol of China's invincibility and her magnificent spirit of resistance. It had been an honour to us to have them here in the city. Those who had been fortunate to meet them would not forget them and their cause. "I feel convinced in my heart that we shall stand shoulder to shoulder

and shall render whatever help we can to each other in the furtherance of that great cause."

Addressing the young men, Pandit Nehru said: "To-day you raise slogans. I myself have shouted slogans in the past and I shout them now and will shout them in the future, but to-day the only slogan, which is the right slogan, is the bursting of bombs which will drown all your slogans. How are you going to meet this slogan, is the problem?"

Continuing Pandit Nehru said: "What is happening in the world to-day? Proud empires are falling before our eyes; huge structures of Governments are collapsing. No one knows what will happen in the course of the next six months or a year. No one knows when this war will end. No part of the world can escape the war. The question is how to face it, we cannot face it by cursing this man or that."

Concluding, he said, that long before this war started the National Congress had declared its policy in regard to Fascism and aggression. "Do you think we are likely to change our opinion because Japan and Germany are the foes of the British? Japan and Germany present the very worst types of Imperialism. We have always said that we would neither have British Imperialism nor any other type of Imperialism, nor Fascism nor Nazism. Do not fall into that terrible error that in order to get rid of one we should ask the aid of the other. Therein lies danger, and if any of us think like that, then he is a coward and a slave. Why should we think in terms of some outsider ruling India? We must measure all these dangers and take a vow not to bow before them."

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru again and again deplores the undemocratic attitude of Great Britain, which should have been the champion of democracy the world over. He

explained this point of view in an excellent speech at Calcutta on February 23, 1942. The students of India must follow up the example of China's "bamboo" universities, if necessary, but carry on a relentless fight against foreign domination.

"Generally speaking, Mr. Churchill is a brilliant leader, but his mind is the Victorian mind," observed Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, speaking to the Congress workers of Bengal assembled at the office of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee.

Pandit Jawaharlal added: "The British Government is an aged Government. It is a very reactionary Government. Mr. Churchill's leadership is brilliant in the sense that it has kept the morale of the British people, but it is a dead weight in the sense of the real psychological leadership of the world."

Speaking on the present international situation, Pandit Nehru said that it meant many important problems which included India's reaction to it and what India could do in regard to it. It was important that they should think of the war not merely in military terms—in terms of arms or efficient armies. That would be an extremely limited view. They were going through a very big revolution in the world's history—perhaps, the biggest the world had ever seen. He remembered that since the last war there must have been about as many as 120 international conferences trying to solve the world's problems. They, however, did not succeed in solving even certain parts of those problems, although the biggest statesmen of the world met together. It was because they wanted to retain the old structure. Ultimately this war came on.

Pandit Nehru pointed out that many in the country, particularly the Socialists and Communists, considered the problems facing them to-day more in an academic way.

They ought to take a realistic view of what was happening before them, and adjust the socialistic principles of other countries to the conditions prevailing in India.

Explaining the duty of Congress workers and volunteers with regard to A.R.P. and civil defence measures, Pandit Nehru said that when air raids took place, Congress workers and volunteers should carry on their work in creating a sense of security in the minds of the people. They should and could co-operate in this matter with other organisations or groups working for the same end. He stressed the need for unity among all sections of people.

With reference to women workers, Pandit Nehru said that they should go from house to house at the present moment just to meet the womenfolk there and make them less panicky. He asked everyone to be ready at the present moment to meet the situation with courage and confidence.

A statement to the effect that the inclusion even of progressive elements in the British Cabinet would not bring about any change in the present British policy with regard to India was made by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, while addressing a public meeting at Mohammadali Park this evening.

The Pandit said that he for one did not believe that the Cabinet would be willing to accede to India's demands, and hence, in his opinion, there was no question of any compromise between the Congress and the British Government.

The problem before them, Panditji said, was what they were going to do in case India was invaded. The responsibility in this respect lay on the Government, but they knew what kind of Government they had. Then the question was: what should the people do? The statements issued by the Congress at the beginning of the war, initiating its

policy in this connection, was in the right direction. Its first and foremost aim was the independence of India. The old attitude of the British Government towards India's demands still continued. That was regrettable, no doubt. They must not look to any outside foreign help. They must rely absolutely on their own inherent strength to achieve their independence. The pages of Indian history bore testimony to the fact how the lure of outside help had brought about India's slavery. The story of imperialist venture of Japan and Germany was not unknown to them. Indians must stick to their own ideals even if they were difficult of achievement. But whatever happened, India would not bow down her head before any invader.

The Indian National Congress had repeatedly declared that if power was transferred to the people of this country, they would be responsible for their own defence. But the British politicians were still persisting in their blunders. If they had listened to the Congress two-and-a-half years ago, the situation of the world now would have been different. They were prepared to take the responsibility even now. They might not be able to do things which they could have done before. But if that responsibility came, they would not shirk it.

An advice to students to think deeply and prepare themselves to meet the perils and difficulties arising out of the present crisis, was given by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, while addressing a meeting at the Scottish Church College Hall.

He said : When he had heard the shouts of 'Inqilab' Zindabad,' he often wondered if they realised that the 'Inqilab' that they shouted was over them, above them and below them, and it might overwhelm them. The biggest 'Inqilab' was happening in the world to-day and it might also happen in India,

The point was: were they ready to welcome the storm that was coming upon them? It might upset their whole life and the life of their community. If they were really serious about it, they should prepare themselves for it.

For four years-and-a-half there had been 'Inqilab' in China in the fullest measure. Almost all the biggest universities were razed to the ground; students suffered; many of the students and teachers were killed; many of the students and teachers escaped and wandered through the country. In the hinterland of China they started new universities in bamboo huts in the course of two or three weeks. When he visited these "bamboo universities" in China, he felt the power of new China.

During the last two years great nations had collapsed like a house of cards. What China did during these years would astonish them. Their tremendous achievements were due to the enormous vitality and spirit of the people. Had they in India got that vitality and that spirit?

"Whatever happens let us play our great part as men and women of India. If we can do so all would be well," observed the Pandit, addressing another meeting of the students at the University buildings.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru hopes that Free India and Free China will work hand in hand in the world of tomorrow. On March 4, 1942, there appeared an important message from Pandit Nehru in the papers of England.

"Destiny itself was bringing India and China together again", said Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru in a cable from Allahabad to the *News Chronicle*, London.

"Ever since the Japanese aggression began in Manchuria, India has condemned it and expressed warm sympathy with China," he declared. "When I visited China 2½ years ago, I met everywhere with a desire of closer contacts with India.



Generalissimo Chiang Kai-Shek came to us as a living symbol of the magnificent resistance of China against Japan. He came also as a symbol of not only past friendship but present and future comradeship. Many people in India think in terms of a larger federation of which China and India will be members. Our full sympathies are with the Chinese people and we would welcome all help to them. We have seen what has happened in Malaya and parts of Burma. The Indian people are politically more advanced and, therefore, cannot be affected so much by interested propaganda from the Axis countries which flows daily in the Hindustani broadcasts from Tokyo Bangkok, Berlin and Rome. We know we have to resist all aggressors by the best means and cannot submit to any domination. This war is likely to be a long one and what happens in India will make a vital difference to it as well as to the future that will emerge out of it. In that future a free India and a free China will pull together and no world arrangement which fails to settle their problems is going to endure. Asia is going to play a big part in the years to come."

Pandit Nehru sent a heartening message to China on the occasion of the China Day on March 7, 1942. It was broadcast on March 8, from the Delhi Station of All-India Radio. He declared that India and China were great comrades in the adventure of man. He recollected his visit to China touchingly and reminded us of the sufferings that China had undergone in her heroic stand-up against the Japanese hordes.

"Many years ago I thought and dreamt of China and India coming closer to one another, meeting again after a long separation and co-operating to their mutual advantage. When fate and circumstances sent me to China two-and-a-half years ago, that dream became more vivid and my mind was filled with the days of long ago when pilgrims and travellers crossed the oceans and mountains between China and India in search

of the rich cultural inheritance which each country possessed. I saw myself in the long line of those pilgrims journeying to the heaven of my desire. The recent visit of Generalissimo Chiang Kai-Shek and Madame Chiang seemed to bring that dream very near to realisation. We had in our midst the very symbols of China and they came to us bringing good-will for India and her people, and their ardent desire for closer bonds with our country. They brought China very near to us and their presence itself was an inspiration. Rock-like they had stood in the midst of peril and disaster and never flinched, and out of misfortune itself they had plucked the fine flower of youth and hope and strength. The Generalissimo was the symbol of China's freedom and unity and the determination which never wavers; the radiant lady who came with him and who was his partner in life's journey, showed us how gracious womanhood can face even the storm of war when the cause of freedom beckons. Together with millions of their countrymen and countrywomen, they had played the game of life and death and thrown themselves in that brave adventure which had transformed China and astonished the world.

And so the dream came very near to me and took shape and I saw the future filled with hope because China and India were friends and comrades in the great adventure of man. The countries of Europe were small and stuffy, the history of Europe, in spite of its brilliant periods, was a mere episode in man's story. But India and China looked back to thousands of years and drawing strength from their rich heritage, had survived the shocks and catastrophies that might otherwise have overwhelmed them. They will survive the peril and dangers of to-day also and I have no doubt will forge new bonds which will keep them linked together in friendship and comradeship. May good fortune attend China in the present and in the future, and the victory she has richly deserved be hers in full measure.

British Imperialism alone stands in the way of India's effective help to China. Pandit Nehru clarified this in his speech on July 4, 1942 at Nagpur.

Indians at the moment being a subject nation, they could not help China. Unless India was free she could not give China any help, declared Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, addressing a public meeting convened by the Nagpur Town Congress Committee.

Pandit Nehru added that Britain professed to be fighting for freedom and democracy. Yet she denied these to people in her empire. The result was that subjugated people like India developed resentment and hatred towards Britain. That was the reason why Malaya and Burma fell so quickly. If India was given her freedom, Indians would fight with the same zeal and enthusiasm as the Chinese and Russians. For a present day war a nation's full co-operation was essential. The present Government of India could not get that co-operation.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, addressing the gathering, said that the Government of India continued to follow their peace-time policy of sowing seeds of disunity which became evident from the Cripps' proposals. The Government's discrimination against Indians in the treatment of evacuees caused resentment. As long as the Government's treatment was such, he, for one, could not support such a Government. But, said Pandit Nehru, events were fast moving in the world and India could not remain unaffected. Indians could not sit idle. At the present time it was essential that the British should leave India for the protection of the country and for helping China. If only the British Government declared that they would leave the country, India could form a Provisional Government in two

or three days and then decide on its policy for meeting aggression and helping China.

Pandit Nehru added that unfortunately Mr. Jinnah's whole attention was towards the British Government. He wanted the British Government to do everything for him. The same attitude was being adopted by the Mahasabha. For the sake of our own freedom and for the good of the world, we should decide what we should do now. In a world where revolutionary changes were taking place Indians could not remain aloof. He wanted India to rise from its slumber. Even if ten to fifteen lakhs of people had to die, they must be ready for it.

Thus Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru made clear his ideas of "Quit India" on the eve of the August Resolution. He wants Britain to go, so that India may be able to help forward the cause of democracy throughout the world. It is an effective answer at once to British and other foreign critics of that demand and to that demand itself.

It is an effective answer to the former, inasmuch as it makes it unmistakably clear that so far from being intended to embarrass and weaken the British and Allied war effort, as they allege it to be, it is intended primarily to strengthen and intensify that effort, as far as it is in India's power to strengthen and intensify it. "The demand for the withdrawal of British rule from India," said Pandit Jawaharlal, "was made because only when India was free would the spirit of resistance to aggression be infused into the people." "I am thinking," he added, "in terms of meeting the present situation. In the present circumstances the people are not in a position to meet it as I want them to meet it." Again, "I am interested in developing all over India a spirit of resistance to Japan. I want that spirit to be

strong enough to withstand the shock of two or three military defeats."

This surely is not the language of a person who either wants to embarrass the Allied war effort or wishes to take advantage of difficult position in which Britain finds herself to-day to push forward India's demand for independence. The true position in this respect was neatly summed up by the Congress President in the course of a press interview. "I consider the defence of India," he said, "as of paramount importance, and only independence would enable her to play her part effectively in the defence of the country." "It may be possible," he added significantly, "to wait for the final achievement of India's independence, but India's obligations for defence could not wait." To accuse such men of a desire to embarrass the war effort of the Allies and to weaken India's own power of defence is either the height of folly or the height of insincerity. That the carrying out of the resolution of the Working Committee, no matter under what safeguards, might in actual practice lead both to the embarrassing of the war-effort of Britain and her Allies and to the weakening of India's defence is a different matter, but there is the greatest possible difference between *desiring* a thing and not being able to foresee that it is likely to be among the unavoidable effects of the policy that is advocated.

Equally clearly have the two leaders shown that there is no truth in the allegation that the Committee, if it is thinking of India's defence at all, is thinking of its defence on non-violent lines. "The Congress position," said Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, "was that India's defence could only be with the armed forces." As for himself, the Maulana added, he would not hesitate to introduce conscription in India. In the same key Pandit Jawaharlal made it perfectly clear that the army in India under a free

National Government would act as all armed forces in the world acted in resisting aggression. It has been said that in their talk with Sir Stafford Cripps, the Congress leaders suggested that India's resistance to Japan would be non-violent. "As a matter of fact," said Pandit Jawaharlal in his reply, "non-violence was not mentioned at all."

We talked only in terms of armed defence of the country in co-operation with the Allies. That was the whole basis of the discussion. To say in the circumstances that the Congress leaders are thinking in terms of non-violence is either to seek consciously and deliberately to discredit and malign the Congress or to forget that in spite of the stupendous influence of Mahatma Gandhi over the Congress in other matters, there is the greatest possible difference between them in this vital matter.

If Pandit Jawaharlal's exposition of the Working Committee's resolution is an effective and conclusive answer to British and American critics of the resolution, it is an equally effective and conclusive answer to the operative part of that resolution itself, namely, that failing the satisfaction of the demand, "the Congress will be reluctantly compelled to utilise all the non-violent strength it might have gathered since 1920 when it adopted non-violence as part of its policy for the vindication of the political rights and liberty of India." This means in plain English that the Congress will then start a *satyagraha* movement on the lines of the movement of 1920.

On another point, too, the Pandit completely answers both himself and the resolution. While he makes the benefits of a National Government both in the shape of increased production and of increased recruitment to the forces of defence unmistakably clear, his actual words make it equally clear that a *satyagraha* movement at the present time could not possibly lead to the immediate establishment of such

contribution in the "New York Nation" on the causes for failure of these negotiations.

Mr. Fischer recalled his long conversation at New Delhi on the 24th May with Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru whom he characterised as "a Prince among men and militant anti-Fascist at a time when many members of the present British Govt—not Sir Stafford Cripps of course, were fawning on Hitler and Mussolini and appeasing Japan" and said, Pandit Nehru told him that Sir Stafford Cripps was not a free agent and Sir Stafford had spoken of a national government with the Viceroy playing the role like that of the British King and not interfering in Government affairs.

Concluding, Mr. Fischer said, "If Sir Stafford Cripps wishes to find the primary difficulty in Indian situation, he does not have to look so far as India. He need merely look across the White Hall to 10, Downing Street."

Madame Chiang Kai-Shek declared at New York on April 15, 1943, that Mahatma Gandhi was "somewhat cloudy" but Pandit Nehru was the proper man to throw his weight into United Nations' cause.

The question of India's freedom was the current world problem of when and to what extent, said Madame Chiang Kai-Shek.

She asserted that Pandit Nehru should be freed to throw India's released political weight into the United Nations' cause because he was a man with a world vision.

She thought that Mahatma Gandhi was somewhat cloudy in his thinking and had not a world vision because he was overcome by his restricted obsession for India's freedom regardless of world conditions.

She suggested that the four great nations—United States, Great Britain, Russia and China—should take the lead in forming a Post-War World Council which should exercise

disinterested control of countries that eventually should have absolute freedom.

Madame Chiang Kai-Shek declared that the system of one-nation mandate conceived in the Versailles Peace Settlement should be abolished.

She made it clear that all little countries should have their freedom.

On May 6, 1943, a question was put in the House of Commons about the whereabouts of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru.

Mr. Amery was asked in the Commons if Pandit Nehru had been transferred from India or completely isolated from other Congress leaders. He replied : " Pandit Nehru is under detention in India and is in the company of other members of the Congress Working Committee. He is permitted to correspond with members of his family on domestic matters."

Asked if members of the Commons could also communicate with Pandit Nehru, Mr. Amery, amid laughter, replied : " On domestic matters if they are members of the family."

Pressed to say if members of Parliament could communicate with Pandit Nehru if they supplied Mr. Amery with copy of the letters. Mr. Amery replied : "That is a matter for the Government of India."

There was another lively debate in the House of Commons on Nov. 5, 1943, on India in which Mr. Cove said, "Our friends like Pandit Nehru and others are in Jail." Mr. Ammon stated that the British Government was responsible for the mess in India. Mr. Pethick Lawrence called it a disaster.

The House of Commons debated the famine situation in India for five-and-a-half hours.

After Mr. Pethick Lawrence had concluded his speech, Mr. Amery, Secretary of State for India, went fully into the



causes of the disaster and placed emphasis on India's vast and increasing population.

Mr. Amery issued a warning that the task of relief was no easy one. Every ship released for this purpose was a diversion from the war effort, then came this hackneyed passage : "We have all to balance against our desire to reduce the effects of the famine in India by our urgent duty to finish the war as quickly as possible. It is only in that way, indeed, that we shall relieve that strain of the war upon India, which has led to the present distress."

Mr. Cove (Labour) said : " We have to restore confidence among leaders of Indian opinion. Our friends like Pandit Nehru and others are in jail. We should seize the opportunity of solving the political problems and we have to release the Congress leaders."

Mr. Ammon said : "Both blame and responsibility are here. It is no good trying to shift it elsewhere."

Sir George Schuster said : " It was a story of half measures and vacillation." He felt the situation had not been faced up to and that the responsibility, which rested in London, had not been fully discharged.

Mr. Ridley (Labour) said : " Powers now being used could have been used with greater effect months ago."

Sir John Wardlaw Milne (Conservative) said : " If there had been a strong Federal Government, things might have been different."

Sir Alfred Knox said that Governments, which had excesses, should be forced to give up their grains to others. The cause of the present position, he thought, was jealousy of different provinces to save their own people.

Mr. Godfrey Nicholson said : " It will be tenfold disgrace to us if we let further tragedies of administration occur."

Winding up the debate Sir John Anderson, Chancellor

of the Exchequer made one of the most progressive speeches of his career. Sir John said : "I am glad to note that the Government of India are handling the matter now with great vigour and determination.

"I sincerely believe we have reached the peak of the inflationary processes which have been going on and that prices will tend in future to decline.

"Action was taken by the Government, as a result of which supplies of grain are now flowing freely into Bengal. This process will go on up to the end of this year."

On August 11, 1943, a U.S.A. Congresswoman paid a remarkable tribute to Pandit Nehru. She declared that he was a very good and great man with a lofty character. He censured President Roosevelt for his deafness to the cause of India's freedom.

The New York Congresswoman, Clare Booth Luce, the frequent administration critic, addressing a meeting at the Town Hall held to commemorate the anniversary of the jailing of Pt. Nehru, Mahatma Gandhi and other Indian leaders, censured Mr. Roosevelt for not championing Pt. Nehru. She said, "Mr. Roosevelt is the world's best informed man so they say. He must know that Pt. Nehru is the man so good and great and of such a lofty mind and character that he makes most of our own leaders look almost shabby mentally, and certainly very shabby spiritually, in comparison. He must know that Pt. Nehru's only fault is his passionate love for the Western concepts of political freedom and democracy."

Sirdar J. J. Singh, President of the India League in America, offered a resolution calling for the resumption of negotiations between the Indian parties and the Indian Government and for the formation of a Provisional National Government and a complete post-war freedom for India guaranteed by the United Nations.

On July 8, 1943, Sir Richard Ackland demanded the release of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and the formation of a National Government with his support.

"The situation in India has deteriorated more than the people in this country can realise. Mediation by the United Nations was the best way to break the deadlock. To-day that hope has gone." Thus observed Sir Richard Ackland, a member of the British Parliament, leader of the influential Commonwealth Party, in an interview with me.

Sir Richard added, "The present policy of accepting the deadlock must inevitably be disastrous. It is a confession of the bankruptcy of the Tory statesmanship. The present deadlock can only be broken if a National Government representative of the Indian people is established and empowered to treat with the British Government on equal terms. The first step to this end must be the release of political prisoners."

In the course of a manifesto issued by the party earlier it was stated, "If, as the British Government insists, there is no practical difference between Dominion status and national independence, we are allowing a sentiment to conquer the sense in refusing to allow independence to Indians. To withhold it till the differences of minorities have been resolved is equivalent to direct refusal. The Commonwealth Party believes that (1) all political prisoners in India should be released. Secondly, power should be transferred to a government either composed of eleven elected Provincial Prime Ministers or formed by Indian leaders such as Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, Mr. Rajagopalachari, Mr. Jinnah and Pandit Nehru. Thirdly, Britain should make a treaty with this government making necessary arrangements for control of armed forces in India."

On November 15, 1943 Americans and nationals of India celebrated Jawaharlal Nehru's 54th birthday at a Dinner

Meeting held at Ceylon India Inn, 148 West 49th Street, New York City.

Speakers included Christine Weston, author of the recently published novel on India—"Indigo." And Dr. Syed Hossain, the well-known Muslim Nationalist. Sirdar J. J. Singh, President of India League of America was the Chairman.

A resolution demanding the release of Nehru, Mahatma Gandhi and other popular leaders was moved by the Chairman. The text of the resolution follows :

" This gathering of Americans and Nationals of India assembled in the City of New York under the auspices of the India League of America to celebrate the 54th birthday of Jawaharlal Nehru, resolves :

" That the British Government in India be asked to immediately release Jawaharlal Nehru, who is one of the greatest champions of democracy and a crusader against fascism, totalitarianism and imperialism.

" That along with Nehru, other popular leaders<sup>1</sup> including Mahatma Gandhi, should be released so that their services may be utilized in famine-relief work.

" That the release of the leaders should synchronize with the political settlement in India by the creation of a National Government in New Delhi.

" That this Government should consist of representatives of all parties.

" That the breaking of the political deadlock and creation of a National Government will galvanize the 390 million people of India and will assure them that the United Nations are fighting for freedom for all.

" That the whole-hearted and enthusiastic co-operation of the people of India is vital on the eve of the impending attack upon Japanese-controlled Burma under the leadership

of Lord Louis Mountbatten.

"That the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Conference now meeting in Atlantic City be requested to give India famine relief precedence over other matters and do all they can to rush food to India.

"That public-spirited Americans be asked to start an American Committee for famine relief in India.

"That this Committee should raise funds and immediately send medicine and nutritious concentrated foods by air to India."

On January 21, 1944, Mr. Leland Stowe brought forth a book in America, entitled: *They Shall Not Sleep*. It dealt with China, Burma and India. The Indian National Congress could find no more ardent apostle than this crusading reporter. His knowledge and sincerity of intentions are considered beyond doubt by all the critics.

The author served as a correspondent when the Japanese overran Hong-Kong, Malaya and Burma.

Mr. Stowe, describing Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru, whom he interviewed during the Cripps period, as a man of great intelligence, having an intangible aura of nobility around him—nobility in spiritual sense, says: When asked whether there was any likelihood of his imprisonment again, Pt. Nehru said with the curious laughter of a man whose spirit is free: "I should put it fifty-fifty chance either way."

Dealing with the American comment on the failure of Cripps Mission Mr. Stowe writes: "Reading those American comments in New Delhi, the sum total effect was that they formed one loud, impatient lecture delivered by the U.S.A. to India's people. It was said: 'You have been offered Dominion Status and independence. Why don't you take it? Don't you realise that we Allies are at war and have not got time to discuss the details of the question? Why should you

insist on a large share of responsibility for the defence of your own country? What is this all arguing about the question? The Japanese may hit you any moment. Don't you understand that there is no time now to waste for discussing mere details of ways and means?" "This is what the American reaction sounded like, petulant and childish. The Indians had not even the opportunity of replying to the stranglely undemocratic sermons given by our safe, secure editorial God," Mr. Stowe added.

If so, Indians would have answered like this, he says: "You Americans say that there is no time for discussion! But these details will determine whether in actuality we would ever get freedom of Self-Government. You say that there is no time—but whose fault is that? Did not we pose this question frankly in the first weeks of the war in 1939? You Americans say we are endangering the democratic cause. Is it we who endanger it? Or is it those who waited so long before offering the use of even a portion of democratic Self-government? Our lives and our children's lives are involved and yet the voices of America's free press chide us for being unreasonable. Were your Washington, Jefferson and the signatories of the Declaration of Independence willing to wait until England's European war was settled? What happened to the Americans then? We thought you believed in true democracy. We thought you were our friends."

Summing up Mr. Stowe says: "I do not think that any objective observer of Cripps negotiations can absolve the British Government—particularly Mr. Churchill and Mr. Amery, the Tory imperialists, dominating factors, in London's Government—from the major responsibility of its failure. One can grant that India constitutes just about the most complicated political, social and religious problem that can be found anywhere on earth. One can grant that Indians,

who have never known the responsibilities of freedom of Self-Government, are excessively sensitive and are often difficult people for the Westerners to deal with or understand. One may even grant that Mahatma Gandhi, for reasons with which I personally have little sympathy, may have secretly wanted to prevent agreement. Nevertheless the British Government had all the physical power in India and as a consequence it had the chief responsibility for offering the proposal which, events have proved, was riddled by several most debatable loopholes."

Among the errors and abuses, Mr. Stowe mentions primarily : "the maintenance of Amery-Linlithgow continuance in India Office ; delay in making any offer which when finally made was of "take-it or leave-it" kind ; the fact that Indians were taken into the war without being consulted ; ignoring of Chiang Kai-Shek's intervention ; urging the British to give Indians real political power, so that they might realise that their participation in the war was not merely an aid to the United Nations for securing victory but also a turning-point in their struggle for India's freedom."

The echo of foreign Pro-Nehru propaganda was also heard in India. Rt. Hon. Srinivasa Sastri rose at Bangalore on the morning of January 25, 1944 to realize that Pandit Nehru alone could represent India at the tables of forthcoming Peace Conference.

The need for India being represented on the coming Peace Conference by men of patriotism, knowledge, tact and truly representing the country's cause was once again made by the Rt. Hon. Srinivasa Sastri, delivering a lecture under the auspices of the Mysore State Journalists' Association at the Intermediate College.

He affirmed that India was bound to get representation at the World Conference and it was their duty to bring pres-

sure on the Government of India to see that the country was represented by true representatives of the people. America, Russia and China were continually asking the British people 'What about India?' and Mr. Sastri did not think that query would go in vain. The British people, added Mr. Sastri, could not go on for any length of time brushing aside this question.

The present Government of India had no sympathy with their aspirations. To maintain the present state of affairs in this country, namely, nobody doing anything, was just what the Government of India wanted. It was just what the present British Premier and the Secretary of State for India wished for, and possibly even the present Viceroy too, although he had not yet spoken one way or the other.

Mr Sastri, therefore, asked newspapers to do their duty—newspapers that were run in the interests of Indian people—to bring the problem in a strong and undeniable form before the Government.

In this connection, Mr. Sastri said that China might raise the question of the abolition of colour bar at the World Conference, and she would look to India for support. India had, therefore, to send in only strong men having the backing of the people to support China in this demand. They could not, for example, expect Dr. N. B. Khare and Sir M. Usman to do this.

Mahatma Gandhi and Pandit Nehru alone were capable of aiding China in this demand.

Dr. Syed Mahmud, a member of the Congress Working Committee, who was released on account of ill-health, early in 1945, gave an idea of the life that Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and his companions were leading inside the Ahmednagar Fort, to a correspondent of the "Indian Express" Madras, on February 15, 1945.



Dr. Syed Mahmud : " The prison is something like the close prison we know—a prison within a prison. The gate of the Ahmednagar prison opens into the Fort enclosure and consists of two long rows of rooms, with the gate in front and connected at the other end by another line of small rooms. The first room on the right, as one enters at the gate, is occupied by Sardar Patel.

"The order of occupation of the other rooms is as follows : second room, Maulana Azad ; third, Mr. Asaf Ali ; fourth, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, who shared it with Dr. Syed Mahmud ; fifth Pandit G. B. Pant ; sixth, Mr. Shankerrao Deo who shared it with Dr. Profullah Chandra Ghose ; seventh, Dr. Pattabhi ; eighth, Acharya Kripalani ; ninth, Acharya Narendra Deo and the tenth, Mr. Harikrishna Mehtab. The eleventh room is the dining room.

" There is only one tree in the courtyard in front of the rooms, and this is at the corner near Sardar Patel's room.

" The Sardar has established a reputation for keen humour among his colleagues and, what is more remarkable, his good humour has lost none of its sting. Acharya Kripalani continues to specialise in biting jokes. Pandit Nehru's enthusiasm for gardening has remained undiminished. He has, at his own cost, obtained flower seeds of all kinds and converted half the courtyard into a pleasant garden, digging and manuring it with his own hands.

" The dining room is the place for all confabulations. Every week, each one takes charge of all arrangements in the dining room. Pandit Nehru is most fastidious in laying the tables and arranging flowers. Though the kitchen is separate, almost all the detenus would try their hand at cooking something or other in the dining room. While Nehru specialises in cooking eggs, Dr. Pattabhi cooks 'uppuma.' Dr. Mahmud cooked vegetable kababs in his day, but Acharya

Kripalani is the master cook, who would even attempt and make excellent cakes. Deepavali, Dussehra, Ramzan, etc., were duly celebrated with extra dishes. The Independence Day was celebrated with due solemnity in the dining hall, which was decorated with flowers and national flags. The birthday of Jawaharlalji was also celebrated when he was garlanded, and extra dishes were prepared.

"Dr. Pattabhi continues to specialise in memory feats. He keeps all the newspaper files and would furnish any particular item at a moment's notice. Pandit Nehru, Acharya Kripalani, Dr. Pattabhi and the Maulana get down plenty of books, but the prize library is in Jawaharlal's room.

"Once a week Jawaharlal used to make Chinese tea in the dining room.

"The Maulana is a very poor eater and hence his heavy loss in weight. Dr. Pattabhi has the incorrigible habit of getting up at two in the night and eating something or other. Dr. Profullah Ghosh was the inveterate spinner, and spun enough yarn for 16 *sarees* while in detention. The other regular spinners are Dr. Pattabhi, Acharya Kripalani and Mr. H. K. Mehtab. Pandit Nehru spins off and on, and has made enough yarn for one *saree* for his daughter.

"But the most famous item of all is a small coffee club which is run uninterruptedly on all nights in the dining room. The permanent members of the night coffee club were Pandit Nehru, Dr. Syed Mahmud, Acharya Kripalani, Acharya Narendra Deo and Pandit Govind Vallabh Pant. Others joined in occasionally. Every subject under the sun was discussed in the coffee club. Jawaharlalji was the most vivacious talker. Pandit Pant always impressed his listeners with his profound erudition.

"Once or twice Sardar Patel, Mr. Asaf Ali, Dr. Profullah Ghosh and Dr. Syed Mahmud were taken out for medical-

examination. They were always taken in a closed lorry, and there was a tremendous display of armed sentries everywhere.

"In spite of all restrictions and limitations, the detenus thus kept up a strenuous, useful and unperturbed existence."

When month after month passed, and the British bureaucracy turned a deaf ear to the release of Pandit Nehru and his companions, Mahatma Gandhi became exasperated with his own untimely release. He made a significant remark at Wardha on February 27, 1945.

In the course of his concluding address to the Hindustani Prachar Conference, Gandhiji said :—"It is my misfortune that I am out when my colleagues, Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru and Maulana Azad, are yet interned. I don't want them to come out with flattery. I would prefer their death in jail, for which I will not shed tears. They have sacrificed a good deal for which I have appreciation."

On January 27, 1945, Miss Pearl Buck declared that "England's relation to Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru is a matter for the whole world." That is a rare tribute, not paid as yet even to Mahatma Gandhi.

Miss Pearl Buck, addressing an India-League-arranged dinner in honour of Mrs. Vijay Lakshmi Pandit, said that there was a parallel position in Russia in the last war as it is in India in this war. She declared that India lost more lives in this war than any other country except China. Terrible famine in India last year was the direct result of war.

Bishop Francis J. McConnell said at the present time, "our friends in England are very impatient with the United States for asking explanations about England's policy in India. They tell us that India is England's own affair. As a matter of fact, however, England is in such a relation to the United States as an ally that England's relation to India is very much

the affair of the United States.' It will not do for England to protest against the questions as long as we are engaged as Allies in the world's struggle. Moreover England's relation to Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru is a matter for the whole world. There is such a thing as decent respect for opinions of mankind and it is in the name of that respect we insist upon a difference in the treatment of one who is leader of the world opinion.

During the San Francisco Conference while Sir Feroze Khan Noon attacked Mahatma Gandhi and the Congress bitterly, he—even he—could not help paying an honest tribute to the genius of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru.

Sir Firoze Khan Noon turned all guns against Mahatma Gandhi and asserted how could one accept the leadership of a man who advised the Allies to lay down their arms before Germany and Japan. Sir Firoze referred to the oft-quoted saying that Mr. Gandhi went about not wanting "to accept the post-dated cheque of a crashing bank." Sir Firoze added that "Mr. Gandhi and his party" wanted to take advantage of the predicament in which Britain had been placed after the fall of Burma, when most of the troops were out of India to fight the Japanese in India's gates.

One point Sir Firoze said was : "Mr. Gandhi is a gentleman, whom God alone can understand."

Barring Sir Firoze's attacks against Mahatma Gandhi's pacificism and repeated references to "our internal difficulties, Hindus, Muslims, Untouchables, Princes and so forth," he made few admissions which favoured the Indian nationalist cause.

Sir Firoze stated : "If you ask me how many people in India agree with Mr. Gandhi, that India should be a completely free country, I should answer a hundred per cent. Every Muslim, the Untouchables and all other minorities want India completely to be free."

over' anything," he said; "leadership is not a plug of tobacco that can be passed from one man to another.

"Pandit Nehru, though at the moment disabled by disgraceful and cowardly imprisonment, is a very notable leader, in no way extinguished by Gandhi."

Then Shaw delivered his customary parting shot: "But what have I to do with all this?" he queried, "I am not an Indian."

On May 11, 1945, fifteen members of British Parliament, including William Dobie, D. N. Pritt, William Gullacher and John Hynd, demanded the release of Pandit Nehru. Following is the full text of the letter:—

"Thirteen successive defeats of the Viceroy's Government in the Central Legislative Assembly have more than a constitutional meaning. It proves beyond doubt that Britain has completely lost confidence of the representative Indians. It proves also that the British administration in India is carried on without the moral support of the people. Surely this is contrary to the British idea of democratic rule.

"It is not our purpose in this letter to go into the rights and wrongs of the Indian situation but one thing seems quite clear to us. No policy in India will succeed without the release of the peoples' trusted leaders, like Pandit Nehru and Maulana Azad, who have been detained without trial since August, 1942.

"We demand, therefore, immediate and unconditional release of all Congress prisoners. Not only will it help solution of the Indian deadlock but will enable India to form her national government which alone can represent the country at San Francisco Conference. We must not ignore the voice of a man like Mr. Gandhi who has condemned and repudiated the Indian delegation to San Francisco which has been selected by the Viceroy without any popular or party backing in India.

"We firmly believe that India with her proud and ancient civilisation has much to contribute to the stability and peace of the world."

What does a New Zealander think of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru? Mr. J. J. Singh, the President of India League of America described his experiences as follows on May 23, 1945 at San Francisco:—

In the afternoon I had an interesting talk with Mr. Peter Fraser, Prime Minister of New Zealand, a chairman of the "Trusteeship Committee."

When I introduced myself and said, "I am from that unfortunate country called India," Mr. Fraser smiled and said: "No, not unfortunate but a great country, with a great past and I am sure with a great future."

I put the same question to Mr. Fraser which I had put to Commander Stassen as to where, if at all, India fits in this picture of the world security organization. Mr. Fraser, who is a very pleasant man, said: "India should remain a member of the British Commonwealth and become a dominion." He assuringly added: "Take it from me that to be dominion is to be completely free. You certainly do not want to be completely cut loose from Britain, do you?" I answered: "If the present bitterness and hatred are allowed to continue, no Indian would want to look at an Englishman's face. Mr. Fraser became facetious and said: "You would not mind looking at my face, would you? I am a Scotsman." Then Mr. Fraser became serious and said: "I have many times talked to Mr. Eden and Mr. Amery on this subject. I can assure you that I will do everything to get India Dominion Status. You can rely on that." Then he said: "I think everything should be left to Nehru. We should deal with him. He is a great man. I have never met him but he is the man we should deal with."

And when I interjected how could they deal with him when Nehru was in jail, Mr. Fraser said: "I know that is very unfortunate. Something must be done about that."

Mr. Fraser then asked a few questions about Indian newspapers and the progress they were making. He said: "I think the *Statesman* of Calcutta in recent years has been fair towards India's cause."

Mr. Fraser created a very good impression on me. I wish men like him really influence diehards like Amery and Churchill.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru came into prominence during the British elections. His release became a formidable plank in the electioneering campaign.

The election contest in Sparkbrook division Birmingham in which Mr. Palme Dutt, Vice-Chairman of the Communist Party is opposing Mr. Leopold Amery, Secretary for India was described as a "star election fight" in the "Daily Worker."

After tracing the careers of the two candidates, the "Daily Worker" says: "Mr. Amery, born in India" now Secretary for India, stands as the principal jailor of India. He has thrown tens of thousands of progressive-men like Pandit Nehru—into prison."

## Wavell Plan And After

### CHAPTER IX

THE Wavell Plan was accompanied by jail delivery of the members of the Congress Working Committee on June 15, 1945. And out came our hero, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the supreme statesman. As soon as he came out, he was faced by the Wavell Plan, but being not an invitee, he was saved considerable worry which fell directly on the shoulders of Maulana Azad. The previous evening Lord Wavell had declared:—

“I have been authorised by His Majesty's Government to place before Indian political leaders proposals designed to ease the present political situation and to advance India towards her goal of full self-government. These proposals are at the present moment being explained to Parliament by the Secretary of State for India. My intention in this broadcast is to explain to you the proposals, the ideas underlying them, and the method by which I hope to put them into effect.

“This is not an attempt to obtain or impose a constitutional settlement. His Majesty's Government had hoped that the leaders of the Indian parties would agree amongst themselves on a settlement of the communal issue, which is the main stumbling block, but this hope has not been fulfilled.

“In the meantime India has great opportunities to be taken and great problems to be solved which require a common effort by the leading men of all parties. I therefore propose, with the full support of His Majesty's Government to invite Indian leaders, to take counsel with me with a view to the formation of a new Executive Council more representative of organised political opinion. The proposed new Council would represent



the main communities and would include equal proportions of caste Hindus and Muslims, if formed, under the existing constitution. But it would be an entirely Indian Council, except for the Viceroy and the Commander-in-Chief, who would retain his position as War Member. It is also proposed that the portfolio of External Affairs, which has hitherto been held by the Viceroy, should be placed in charge of an Indian member of Council, so far as the interests of British India are concerned.

"A further step proposed by His Majesty's Government is the appointment of a British High Commissioner in India, as in the Dominions, to represent Great Britain's commercial and other such interests in India.

"Such a new Executive Council will, you realise, represent a definite advance on the road to Self-Government. It will be almost entirely Indian and the Finance and Home Members will for the first time be Indians, while an Indian will also be charged with the management of India's foreign affairs. Moreover, members will now be selected by the Governor-General after consultation with political leaders, though their appointments will, of course, be subject to the approval of His Majesty the King-Emperor.

"The Council will work within the framework of the present constitution: and there can be no question of the Governor-General agreeing not to exercise his constitutional power of control; but it will, of course, not be exercised unreasonably.

"I should make it clear that the formation of this interim Government will in no way prejudice the final constitutional settlement.

"The main tasks for this new Executive Council would be:—

"First, to prosecute the war against Japan with the utmost energy till Japan is utterly defeated.

Secondly, to carry on the Government of British India with all its manifold tasks of post-war development in front of it, until a new permanent constitution can be agreed upon and brought into force.

Thirdly, to consider, when the members of the Government think it possible, the means by which such agreement can be achieved.

The third task is the most important. I want to make it quite clear that neither I nor His Majesty's Government have lost sight of a long range interim solution, and the present proposals are intended to make a long-term solution easier.

Pandit Nehru delivered his first speech after release at Allahabad on June 18, in which he declared that the Congress was neither crushed nor dead, but he declined to express any opinion on the Wavell Plan until it was duly considered by the Congress Working Committee which was about to meet in Bombay.

"Some people say the Congress has been crushed or is dead: never believe in it. And the reception which you have given to me to-day or the one which I have received at Lucknow confirms my belief," said Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru addressing in Hindustani a large gathering which had collected at Anand Bhawan to receive him.

"Your enthusiasm to-day," continued Pandit Nehru, "reminds me of the events which happened in August 1942. I do not know the full details of those happenings, but whatever they may be, whether my countrymen were right or wrong, I bow my head to those dauntless martyrs who sacrificed their lives for the freedom of the country. I also bow my head to my numerous brother citizens, the people of the province, and the country, who fought and are fighting for the same noble cause. I congratulate them. I have heard of the glorious deeds and many sufferings of the people of the districts of

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Ballia, Azamgarh and Gorakhpur. I pay my warm tributes to them. Their sufferings, their sacrifices and bravery will constitute a chapter by itself in the history of our battle."

Pandit Nehru referred to the release of the members of the Congress Working Committee and said, "I admit that one chapter in the history of the fight for Indian independence has ended and with our release a new chapter has begun. Much, however, still remains to be written. We have pledged ourselves to attain independence for the country. And we shall have to fight till we attain that objective. The mere release of the seven of the members of Congress Working Committee, in itself, therefore, does not smoothen the way of our cherished goal of independence."

Pandit Nehru also referred to the Wavell Plan but declined to say anything on it. "It was not that I have not formed my opinion on the plan. I have," said Pandit Nehru. "But it would be unwise" he added, "to say anything unless I have exchanged my views with other members of the Congress Working Committee." He also indicated that it was the privilege of the Congress President to give the views of the Congress.

Concluding, Pandit Nehru paid tributes to the part played by students in the national struggle. "I am moved to see these children and their display of such enthusiasm," said Pandit Nehru and hoped "when they grow into manhood they would witness the birth of New India."

On June 21, 1945 at Bombay, Pandit Nehru expressed his view that the Wavell Plan might succeed.

"We are seeking an interim agreement and much can be agreed upon that could not be accepted permanently," Pandit Nehru explained.

The interview exclusively for the Associated Press of America, was given after he led a parade through the city along

streets jammed by massed hundreds of thousands of crowding cheering spectators.

From the parade, he rode, to the home of his sister, Mrs. Krishna Hutheesingh, wet, mud-stained and plastered with flower petals from scores of garlands which had been hung around his neck in such profusion that he had to lift them off repeatedly.

At Mrs. Hutheesingh's home on Carmichael Road, he was welcomed by Mrs. Sarojini Naidu. They had not seen each other since that memorable night in August, 1942, when they were whisked off to separate detention camps.

Emerging from the elevator leading to the Hutheesingh apartment, Pandit Nehru took one quick glance around, waved at his daughter Indira with whom he had travelled from Allahabad and then hurried to Mrs. Naidu who arriving earlier had waited to see him. They hugged each other grinning happily, then strolled into a living room, where Pt. Nehru rolled out of his pockets an assortment of *khaddar* yarn, flower petals, and a wad of hundred-rupee notes which an enthusiastic supporter had crowded into his hand during the parade.

### DIFFICULTIES FACING CONFERENCE

Despite his rain-soaked clothes, he sat down to talk to this correspondent who had last seen him at the August Convention in 1942 before he was arrested.

With nearly a dozen members of his family and friends sitting around, Pandit Nehru outlined his views on the Conference and on the difficulties facing it.

He stated at once, as had been stated by other Congress leaders, that any effort to limit Congress representatives to Caste Hindus was wholly unacceptable. The Congress, he said, could not send representatives to the Simla Conference with such a restriction.

He felt that the issue would not be allowed to rise to defeat the more important purpose of the Conference, which was to get some form of a more nearly representative government in office. It was understandable, he said, that the Congress might want Muslims in the Council who represented those many Muslims who supported the Congress. He said there were many Muslims who did not follow the League, although he estimated that the League had grown in strength in recent years.

Nevertheless, he said the League always seemed to be strongest where the Muslim minority was smallest. Where the Muslim population was nearly equal to the Hindu population, or exceeded it, such as in the North-West Frontier, there he said, the League was least strong.

"If only League Muslims were appointed on the Council, all the Muslims who voted for Congress candidates in years past would be unrepresented," he said.

"The same would be true of the many Muslims in the North-West Frontier, who do not follow the League and in Bengal and in the Punjab."

"But such issues could be dealt with at the Simla Conference without great difficulty," he said.

He emphasised that after all the Conference was designed only to set up an interim Government to operate until the elections could be held. Elections, he said, would give a basis for a recasting of the arrangement reached on the basis of strength of the various groups shown up in the voting.

He predicted that if elections were held now, the Congress majorities in the provinces would be very large.

He said it was likely that more Muslim League candidates would be elected than were chosen in 1937. He asked that it should be recognised that the situation in India was a peculiar

situation which tended to emphasize communalism because other types of activity had been suppressed.

"It must be remembered," he said, "that India has been living under military and police government, ever since the outbreak of the rebellion of 1942. The situation should be viewed as similar to the situation in Europe where resistance groups have been held underground until only recently."

In India, he said, a rapid change could be expected as economic and other factors arose to draw public attention away from strictly communal conflicts.

Pt. Nehru said, the Communists had solidified their position after the ban on their operations had been lifted.

It cannot be overlooked, he said, that many of their current leaders are becoming old. He mentioned Mahatma Gandhi, who is in his seventies and Mr. Jinnah, who is in his sixties. Blithely he included himself as in the generation "that is going out".

The latter comment was bound to surprise a good many Indians who long looked upon Nehru as the leader of the younger mind in the Congress. In part this attitude towards him grew out of the period when his father Pt. Moti Lal was a dominant figure in the Congress and Jawahar Lal was the young one. It also reflects the youthful admiration for his strongly left-wing tendencies.

Turning again to the Conference, Nehru said it was likely that the Government was prompted in part to call it because of the problem facing them with the return to civil life in the near future of hundreds of thousands of Indian soldiers.

"It is quite likely," he said, "that a Government with as much popular backing as possible is wanted to help to meet this situation." The Indian army is not a national army, he

said, but insisted that at least among the officers and non-commissioned officers there was much nationalistic sentiment.

"Many entered the army with the intention of learning to fight, so it would be useful if the time should come," Pt. Nehru said, with a trace of a smile.

Despite his own comment that he was among the generation that was passing out," Pt. Nehru still reflects the vigour with which he went into detention nearly three years ago. He is thinner and his cheek-bones stand out more sharply. His hair are a trifle thinner as Mrs. Naidu teasingly pointed out. But the glow remains in his eyes.

Of his period in Ahmednagar fortress, he said, it was the best jail he ever had been kept in, although he did not grow enthusiastic about it. For the first time, he said, there were electric lights. The rooms were fairly large. The food continued bad almost to the end, which perhaps explained his thinness. The main reason for the bad food was the cooking. No outside cook could be retained, because whoever did the cooking had to become a prisoner along with the rest. The result was, he said, that a man who had never cooked before took over the job. In very recent months, he said, a better cook came.

The Working Committee members ate their meals together and could meet when they wished, but had no visitors.

"I didn't see a woman or even a child during the entire time at Ahmednagar," he said.

During his imprisonment he wrote a book on India, partly autobiographical, read much and exercised regularly. With the others, he kept a garden.

After his release from Almora Jail high in the Himalayas, Pt. Nehru said he could not resist the temptation to go still higher, so on his first day of freedom he set out for a family



cabin at Khaliv, where he spent a night and half a day sleeping or listening to the birds in the pines and deodars and thinking quietly. After that he made his way by slow stages to Allahabad, where he remained for a night, then set out for Bombay.

On June 22, 1945, Pandit Nehru gave his views on many current and conflicting problems of the day, such as the policy of the Communist Party of India, Indian Army, August Revolution, Bombay Plan, Black Markets, etc.

Regarding August Revolution, Pandit Nehru said he did not defend the actions of the people involved in the disturbances but the normal reaction of an Indian would be to say: "To hell with any one who tries to push us out of the way. Violence or non-violence, it is more important for people to show courage than to be kicked and harried about by an individual or authority. If the British Government again launches an attack on us, it will be met and met by every man who is attacked. It may be met by ten or a thousand. Man may take it lying down. A nation which submits to this kind of treatment is a dead nation. And I do not want my people to be a dead people. And therefore, if such a thing is done it must be resisted."

Regarding the Indian Communists he said :

"Fundamentally, Communist policy is not from the standpoint of the country where it functions, but from the standpoint of Russian foreign policy. I have every sympathy for Russia and the great advance Russia had made but from many points of view, I do not think a nation's policy can be bound up by the Russian foreign policy. The general question is whether their policy has been injurious to the cause of India."

Pandit Nehru quoted instances of actions taken by great countries when faced with great national and international issues simultaneously such as Russian Non-aggression Pact with

Germany and British policy before the start of the war and said : " Whenever there is a conflict between international and national policies, the national policy wins. If that is true of the great free countries it is infinitely more so in the case of a dependent country like India."

When the Pandit was pressed to say whether the Communists had not been pressing a Congress-League understanding and the release of Congress leaders, he said : " The Communists missed the chance of a life-time in India during the last two or three years. They would have made themselves an enormously powerful party if they had functioned somewhat differently. At a critical moment in India's history, it was difficult to be neutral, but they went to the other side. They may be right but the approach was wrong."

Regarding the Indian Army he said : " It is a very fine fighting force, wherever it has a chance it has done exceedingly well. But I am convinced in my mind that it would have done infinitely better if it had been given national colouring. National sentiment is bound to have influence."

Pandit Nehru said that during the Cripps discussions he asked Sir Stafford Cripps : " If we are in charge of Government, our first job is to infuse national spirit in the Army and make the soldiers feel they are a National Army and make India feel that this is our Army fighting for freedom and democracy and the freedom of our country."

Pandit Nehru had also told Sir Stafford that their first job would be to remove the barriers that isolated the people from the Indian soldier. And Sir Stafford replied : " I am afraid that cannot be done. It is not a National Army. It is not an Indian Army, it is an Indian Sector of the British Army because the Indian Army is an Indian branch of the British Army."

Pandit Nehru said that he asked Sir Stafford : " What about an Indian militia ?" And Sir Stafford had replied that

was a matter for the Commander-in-Chief. Even the militia have to function under the oCmmander-in-Chief. Pandit Nehru said that when they use the word mercenary it was not used in a disparaging sense of the Army itself, but as a legal technical name.

### BOMBAY PLAN

Referring to the Bombay plan the main feature about it was that it puts forward a picture of big changes in a relatively short time. The plan should be judged by the extent it would raise the standard of life and the health of the people. But the main question was what was the authority that was going to run it. The very best plan if run by wrong persons would do harm to the country.

### REGARDING THE BLACK-MARKET

Pt. Nehru said : " Where there is a foreign Government of an authoritarian type, it does not attract the better type of persons. There is moral degradation of a vast number of people, official and non-official. According to the Woodhead Commission's report, black-marketeers made a rift of Rs. 1,000 for each of the 1,500,000 people who died during the Bengal famine.

" It passes one's comprehension how anybody can be so inhuman and callous. I do not kill even a small insect but it would give me the greatest pleasure if all the big profiteers concerned were hung by neck till they were dead."

Referring to Subhas Chandra Bose, he said : " When I was in Calcutta in 1942 there was talk of Subhas Chandra Bose leading an Indian contingent of liberation against India. And I was asked what my attitude would be. I said, ' I will oppose him and fight him because he is coming under Japanese auspices and other Japanese control and more for the advantage of Japan than for India.' Subhas Bose was quite wrong in his methods when he thought that he could

achieve the freedom of India with the help of the Japanese."

Pandit Nehru did not directly reply to a question whether in the event of the new Government coming into being, it would permit Subhas Chandra Bose to come back to India.

On June 24, Pandit Nehru gave his opinion about the San Francisco Conference and British imperialism which is likely to torpedo all hopes of international peace and prosperity.

"It is obvious that there has been a wide desire to evolve the foundations of peace and a just world order but the basic problems which can ensure a world peace have not been tackled by the San Francisco Conference," said Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru in an interview with V. C. Natarajan of the Associated Press of America.

"The obstacles in its way have been great and, I am afraid, they have not been overcome at all. Perhaps something has been done which may prove helpful," added Pandit Nehru.

"It is true that the reality of to-day demands a recognition of the position of the big powers. Nevertheless, the positions of other nations should not be ignored or subordinated in the way it has been done. Great Power rivalries seem to be continuing and inevitably the small nations will tend to group themselves around this or that great power," he said.

"The objections raised to the use of the word 'independence' in the resolution recommending dissolution of colonies and dependencies revealed the ruling motive of the great powers. If there is anything that can cause turmoil and conflict, it is this desire to hold on to colonies and dependencies. The colonies and dependencies will not willingly submit to this position," opined Pandit Nehru.

"The major political parties in Britain stand on the same platform and are indistinguishable as regards India. Unless a radical change takes place among them, we can have no deal with them," said Pandit Nehru, when questioned on British elections.

The rank and file of the Labour movement, he said, belonged to the progressive camp, but they are hardly represented in the leadership.

Pandit Nehru expressed the hope that labour might win in the elections. And so it did.

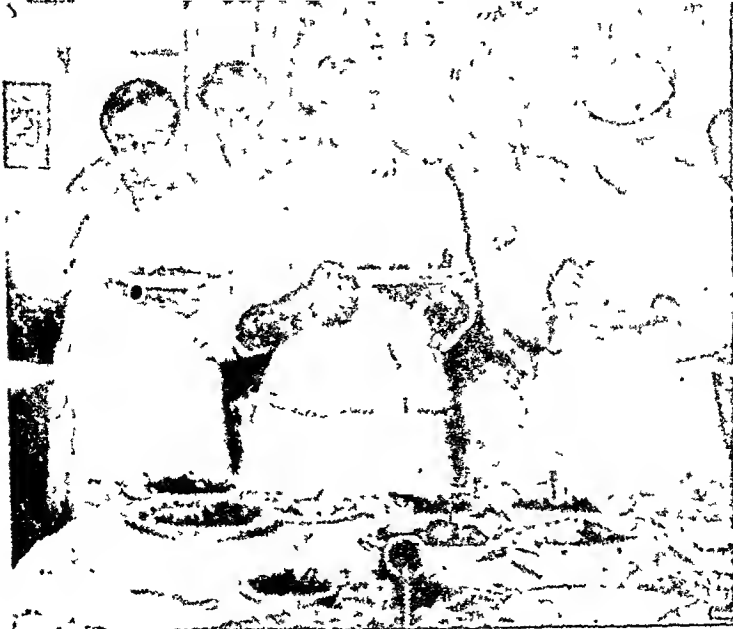
Commenting on the Burma white paper, Pandit Nehru said that it seemed to be a completely unsatisfactory document. If the British Government desired to meet the wishes of the Burmese people, it will have to revise its policy.

Mr. Nehru gave as his brief formula for the preservation of peace in the post-war world, "the elimination, as far as possible of political and economic conflicts between countries and an equitable international order to organise international relations.

"It is obviously essential," he pointed out, "that such an order be based on the national freedom of various countries involved, and that no country should have a sense of alien domination and suppression.

"It seems also necessary that some kind of International Police Force be organised, but there is grave danger of such a force being exploited by the dominant Powers to their own advantage. Realities have to be faced to-day, and the reality is the outstanding position of some great Powers.

"I think it would have been better, from every point of view, to give a far bigger status to the smaller powers in any international settlement. Otherwise, the small Powers in fear and self-defence, will group themselves around each big Power, and big and hostile blocs might face each other."



Where is he looking? While others dine at ease, Jawaharlal has his eyes riveted above the heads of ordinary men.

**Why Nehru keeps young?**  
Because elder statesmen like Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru need the support of his intellectual courage and physical strength.





"Stroke it in your Pipe, Grippe!" commented a national paper when Sir Stafford Cripps announced his plan to India. Here Jawaharlal hold the bag of destiny between President Azad and Ambassador Cripps with his ill-fated plan and pipe.

Asked in view of the imminent general election in Britain what he expected of British Labour, Mr. Nehru said : "The British Labour Party does represent various progressive forces in Britain and, therefore, I wish it success in the elections. But under the present leadership that Party means just nothing to India. It surprises me how the leaders of that party make references to India which exhibit not only colossal ignorance of this country but an amazing insensitivity to the dominant feelings of India."

Mr. Nehru said that he knew that many people in Britain, both among the intellectuals and the working classes, had great sympathy for Indian freedom. "But it must be obvious," he added, "that as a whole the British people pay no attention whatever to India, except in so far as they give expression occasionally to pious platitudes."

"This applies to all the major parties, and certainly to their leaders," he declared.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru was called to Simla by President Azad to attend the meeting of the Congress Working Committee for consultations regarding the Wavell Plan. Simla was literally mad on Sunday 1st July, because Gandhiji's 'heir' and one of the most dynamic personalities, the idol of India's youth, Pandit Nehru arrived on the scene. Over 10,000 people greeted this great son of the soil. On July 8, he declared that progressive socialism and not communism was a solution for India's economic ills.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, number one Congress nominee for the proposed All-India Executive Council, in an exclusive interview with Mr. Stewart Hensley of *United Press of America* at Simla advocated "progressive socialism" as a solution for India's multitudinous economic ills."

However, Pt. Nehru who is considered to have the greatest chance to become Member for External Affairs if



the Council is created, discounted Soviet influence on India and described the recent American comments that India would look more and more to Russia for inspiration and guidance as considerably wide off the mark.

"While vague socialistic ideas are popularly admired in India, and Russian achievements—especially in the central Asia and in war—have greatly influenced Indian opinion, communism as such is no great force in India at present," Pt. Nehru said.

Pt. Nehru pointed out that the Communist Party in India is stronger and better organised than ever since it has been able to function legally in the past three years, but "even so its numbers and influence are most limited. Communists have done good work both in the Bengal famine and elsewhere but having opposed the general trend of the national movement they have created a barrier between themselves and Indian nationalism which greatly lessens their influence outside their own sphere."

While Pt. Nehru envisaged progressive socialism for India, he said, "I imagine a great deal of individual freedom and initiative would still be left. In any large scale planning by state which seems inevitable if progress is to be rapid, some measure of state control and direction is necessary and it is difficult to say how far this will go in the initial stages."

Pt. Nehru emphasized, however, that state planning without real national government would merely be continuation of foreign domination. He said that "India is an outstanding example of long-arrested development due to many causes, chiefly British economic and political control and the result has been a continuing crisis on land and in industry leading to progressive impoverishment of the people."

Since the rapid progress of new state would require capital and trained personnel, any national government would

"welcome co-operation of advanced countries especially America in supplying capital goods and exports," Pt. Nehru said. "But India from long experience of economic domination is most sensitive on this subject and would resist anything leading to the creation of powerful foreign vested interests "

The Simla Conference failed, as its doom was expected by every body, on the communal rock of Mr. Jinnah and the Wavell Plan exploded high into the air. On July 14, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru gave his reactions to the situation arising from the failure of the Simla Conference. His speech is a marvellous political document and gives in a nutshell the entire political difficulties of India on the thorny road of attaining freedom in the past, present and the future. He said :

"I am naturally disappointed that all this effort should have ended in this way. But having become through many experiences a somewhat hard-boiled politician, I am not terribly dejected about anything.

"What really distresses one is not just the result or want of result of this conference but the background in which our problems are usually considered. They somehow resolve themselves into some aspect of the communal problem.

"Fundamentally, the communal problem as well as many other problems, if you analyse them, become a kind of conflict between mediævalism and modernism, between the mediæval outlook and the modern outlook. Obviously, it is not a question of a seat or a job here and there.

"The Congress represents more than any other group the modern outlook, politically and economically, and if I may say so, nationally and internationally. The Muslim League or any other communal organisation inevitably not only represents the particular claims of a group but represents them in a mediæval contest.

“ Politics considered in terms of religious communities is wholly inconsistent with both democracy and any modern conception of politics or economics. There lies the real rub. To give in to this mediæval conception is to throw back the whole course of development in India, political and economic, and try to build a structure which does not fit in with the realities of to-day in any department of life. You can never ignore realities for long and if you try to do so, you do so at your peril.

“ That is the essence of the communal problem, so far as I am concerned, and not a question of services or jobs or anything else, and India will have to decide not to-day, but to-morrow or the day after, whether it is going to be a democratic modern country or an undemocratic mediæval country. The latter choice is really ruled out because it just cannot be done by any country to-day.

“ The normal choice for countries to-day is not between mediævalism and democracy but what might be called just political democracy or something more, that is, economic democracy also, which means socialism in some form or other.

“ At the back of all these superficial conflicts which are sometimes represented by individuals are, of course, impersonal forces at work. Lord Wavell, for instance, occupies a leading position as Viceroy and no doubt his personality counts. Mr. Gandhi or the Congress President also occupies leading positions and what they may say or do counts. So also Mr. Jinnah. But behind all these individuals are those impersonal forces which both control and push on those individuals. Lord Wavell ultimately must function within the limits of British policy. Congressmen must function within the limits of Indian nationalism and Indian independence. What Mr. Jinnah's urges and limitations are I am not competent to say.

So, it is not a question really of individual *bona fides* in the matter but the conflict of impersonal forces, primarily the British power in India and Indian nationalism and, secondarily, certain mediæval urges in India plus various fear complexes and modern progressive tendencies”.

A Canadian correspondent asked if Pandit Nehru's point was that basic British policy in India was to hang on to power in India at any cost, and that if there was a conflict British policy must be in opposition to Indian nationalism.

Pandit Nehru replied there was a fundamental conflict between British imperialism and Indian nationalism, but circumstances and many new factors changed that policy. “I do think that the world situation as it is to-day and as it will be tomorrow is exercising a powerful pressure on British policy to come to some terms with the Indian people. These terms they would like to be as favourable as possible to British interests in India. This is natural, but I think they must realise that the old order in India cannot possibly continue, even though Mr. Churchill would like it to continue.”

“I do not mean,” Pandit Nehru said in reply to a further question, “the average member of the Muslim League is mediæval. I think there are many progressive people in the Muslim League, who once the lid of mediævalism is removed, would become political radicals.”

“It happens in the circumstances of to-day that certain questions have been made to cover up and obscure all the really important political and economic issues in the country. That happens sometimes.

“What are the important issues, after all? The first issue in India is the agrarian problem. Allied to it is the industrial problem. You cannot solve the land problem without solving the industrial problem. They are locked and

inter-locked into each other. These are fundamental questions which apply to the Hindu and Muslim alike. The misfortune is they get covered up by prejudices, which, however superficial they may be, become formidable obstacles at the moment.

"The so-called communal problem in India has no deep roots. By that I do not deny its importance at the present stage. It is very important but it has nevertheless no deep roots and, therefore, I do not think that a solution of it will take a long time once it gets going, because immediately the mediæval lid is removed, the real problems of the day come up, and they have no application to Hindu or Muslim as such."

Pandit Nehru referred to the attitude of the people in the Middle East countries and said although these people had sympathy on religious grounds with their co-religionists in India or elsewhere, there was no appreciation or understanding of this conversion of politics into a cheque-board of religious communities. He also invited foreign correspondents, in particular, to suppose what would happen if America, for instance, was divided into electoral constituencies for Catholics, Methodists, Jews and various other Christian and other sects. "You cannot imagine any democratic system being based on such a thing. Yet, that is what is happening in India to-day. Inevitably you produce conditions in which each community with its separate electorates thinks in terms of its special group interests. "If you have separate electorates in any country under the sun, I guarantee you will have problems worse than the communal problem in India."

Replying to the Muslim League claim that Muslims were a separate nation, Pandit Nehru said: "I will admit that circumstances may produce not a separate nation but a group which is so anti-national that it may be considered a

separate nation. Such a thing may develop. But the real thing is, to-day it is beside the point to talk about nations as such. The modern tendency is for the idea of a nation not to be confused with the idea of a state. The biggest countries to-day are multi-rational "

" If it pleases Mr. Jinnah to consider himself as belonging to a separate nation, there the matter ends. He can call himself that. But it does not solve any problem. Even supposing there are two, three or four nations in India, the problem is how are they to get along together ?"

How are the fears of the Muslims to be disarmed ? asked a correspondent.

" You cannot disarm fears," Pandit Nehru replied.

" Fear is a complex for which you require Psycho-analytical treatment. It is an odd thing that it has been said by some prominent members of the Muslim League, though not by Mr. Jinnah himself, that the Muslims are far stronger and more powerful and if British rule was not there, they could dominate others. On the other hand, they talked of fear of being dominated by the majority. It is absurd to talk of anyone dominating eighty or ninety millions of people. The whole idea is fantastic. My plan of thinking is entirely different from Mr. Jinnah's."

What is the way out ? was the next question asked.

" There may be many ways out," Pandit Nehru replied.

" Obviously one way out which for the moment is not available is for the third party to retire from the scene, either actually or theoretically. I mean there should be no question of the third party imposing its will ; and other parties should realise they have to face the issues themselves without that third party. Then they will face realities. Or in the alternative—obviously, a very desirable alternative—other parties should pull together. L



## CHAPTER X

## The Warrior Statesman

If Jawaharlal admires Mahatma Gandhi warmly, Mahatma Gandhi also praises Jawaharlal with equal fervour. The practicability of one and ideality of the other have gone to make a perfect whole in the political field of India. Mahatmaji has paid a handsome tribute to his "heir," calling him a warrior with the prudence of a statesman :—

"In bravery he is not to be surpassed. Who can excel him in the love of country? He is rash and impetuous, say some. This quality is an additional qualification at the present moment. And if he has the dash and the rashness of the warrior, he has also the prudence of a statesman. A lover of discipline, he has shown himself to be capable of rigidly submitting to it even where it has seemed irksome. He is undoubtedly an extremist thinking far ahead of his surroundings. But he is humble and practical enough not to force the pace to the breaking point. He is pure as the crystal, he is truthful beyond suspicion. He is a knight *sans peur, sans reproche*. The nation is safe in his hands."

The Russo-Japanese War was the first to stir up the enthusiasm of Jawaharlal and every morning found him deeply studying the newspapers. It was the victory of Japan in the Russo-Japanese War that evoked in him the first stirrings of nationalism. He, more than once, dreamed of battles in which he fought sword in hand, for India, to free her from foreign bondage. The fighter had begun to emerge from the chrysalis of domesticity.

1918 was the heyday of Pandit Motilal Nehru—Jawaharlal's father. Majestic and imposing, Pandit Motilal Nehru



was delivering his presidential address at the Political Conference of the United Provinces at Lucknow. A solemn silence pervaded the Conference Hall as the House was listening in rapt attention to Pandit Motilal. The Pandit gave expression to his distress and disappointment at the doings of the British Raj but his (Pandit Motilal's) faith in its *bona fides* seemed to abide. His advice to his countrymen was that they should continue to place faith in the Britishers. The stillness of the House was suddenly broken by a solitary dissenting note "Question." The audience was taken aback and Motilal Nehru paused. "Question, who questions me?" he asked in surprise and anger. "Question!" again came forth from the same quarter and people turned round and saw a well-dressed youth, who had scarcely passed his boyhood, sitting calmly. This youth with sparkling eyes and well-chiselled features was none else but Jawaharlal—Motilal's son—the then coming man of India.

"My feeling about Jawaharlal is nothing but that of love and admiration," says Gandhiji. He further says, "in courage and patriotism none can excel Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. Possessed of a soldier's daring and a statesman's wisdom, he is pure as crystal. He is truthful beyond doubt and brave without a blemish."

An eminent Chinese publicist has aptly summed up the whole thing "To-day, the picture is this: the people listen to Nehru; Nehru listens to Gandhi and Gandhi listens only to God. The inter-play of these forces will bring a free and independent India."

Socialism, it seems to him, does not fit in with the ideology of the Indian National Congress, but in spite of his fervent love for socialism, he will not force the issue and thereby create difficulties in the way of the struggle for Swaraj. Nor does he believe in making India an exact replica of Russia. He is a magnificent apostle of national solidarity.

That is why he feels that it should be possible for all who believe in Swaraj to join ranks even though they might differ on the issue of Socialism.

Pandit Jawaharlal is instinctively and temperamentally unfit to think in terms of communalism. He holds that the communal problem is an artificial problem and that, "It is the creation of interested men at the top, who live in hope of office patronage and seats in Councils, and does not affect the masses." The real solution of the problem, he is convinced, will only come "when economic issues affecting all religious groups and cutting across communal boundaries arise."

Jawaharlal is essentially scientific and fundamentally rationalistic in his attitude to most questions. Once a Socialist expressed surprise that Jawaharlal did not preach against religion, although he was known to be a Socialist. To that criticism Jawaharlal's answer was clear and straight. Socialism and religion—by religion he meant religion in its higher and true sense—were not antagonistic. If, on the other hand, religion meant a certain set of dogmas and rituals, then Socialism which was scientific, shorn of all metaphysics and not dogmatic, was opposed to religion.

Rapid industrialisation is the need of the country and the Pandit believes that this is the best way of combating poverty and of raising the standard of life of the people. He is of the opinion that the *Khadi* and Village Industries programme have a definite place in the present economy of the nation. He looks upon them, however, more as "temporary expedients of a transition stage than as a solution of our vital problems. That transition might be a long one and in a country like India, village industries might well play an important though subsidiary role even after the achievement of industrialisation."

The Swaraj Jawaharlal wants for India is a Panchayat Raj in which all people in the country, not only a few at the top or the middle, will have equal shares irrespective of caste, creed, clan, community or sex. Swaraj and Independence are to him only means to an end, not the end itself; the end is the removal of poverty and the promotion of a state of affairs wherein people may be enabled to lead good and happy lives.

No bird can fly with one wing and no enlightened nation can afford to keep their womenfolk steeped in superstition and ignorance. In India too women have an important part to play. To them he addresses thus: "In India the people are somewhat overwhelmed by the political struggle. So far as women are concerned, they could not entirely think of the political problem. They have to think also of their own disabilities. Whilst they have to share with men in the struggle for political freedom, they will have to bear the whole burden of struggle for their emancipation. Individuals might sympathise with them and help them, but still theirs will be the task of fighting, not so much perhaps actual opposition, though of that there will be enough—but tremendous inertia which is far more dangerous."

The things he dislikes most are exploitation, cruelty and people who, in the name of God, truth and the public good, are busy feathering their nests; and the things he likes most are majestic mountains, limpid water of running brooks, laughter of children, good conversation and little lovely birds. Jawaharlal's strongest point is his courage. Of physical courage he has an unlimited stock and his moral courage is almost unique. He believes in converting and conquering opponents, but he rarely humours them. He does not believe in employing the sweet-honeyed words and his refreshing candour is proverbial. He is a rarely born fighter and his burning combative spirit shines through

sharp and strong language, but he is never unsportsmanlike and never hits below the belt.

He is not fond of oratorical flashes, his speech is slow and delivery halting. But the fibre of his voice and his manner of diction are so charming that people feel inspired while listening to his speeches. On account of Jawaharlal's pleasant personality his utterances appeal to the heart. The intonation which he infuses into his polished Urdu speeches make an already delicious language so exquisite that the audience never feel bored. When he speaks in English, one often wonders whether a native of England could have an equally perfect manner of speech. It is soft, gentle and harmoniously attractive to the ear.

Once at a meeting of the Congress Committee Session in Calcutta, he was very annoyed at the delay in printing the abstract of accounts and the resolution to be brought forward. He reproached his secretary who was responsible for this; he lost his temper; but it was noticeable that the secretary smiled at his chief's irritation, knowing how summary that storm was. As soon as Jawaharlal's exasperation subsided, he smilingly remarked to the A. I. C. C. "The press has not sent any of the printed slips, I have not even the resolution in front of me, so you all just amuse yourself as you please—sing, dance or recite."

During the last election campaign, he travelled over one lakh of miles, in twenty-two months and reached almost every village in India. He used vehicles ranging from bullock carts to aeroplanes. Once he made 150 speeches in one week.

He is a dauntless hero and in him Indian patriotism and nationalism have reached their highest water-mark. Endowed with unique energy, marvellous driving force, remarkable mental alertness, his sincerity is transparent and he is an embodiment of self-sacrifice. He is a doughty champion of

the Indian people and his fervid message goes forth to all of us like a clarion call. Thus he said once :

“ We worked for the dawn but the long night has continued, and it may continue—how long I do not know. Many of us now in the vanguard of the nation's fight may not live to see the dawn. But the dawn will come. Meanwhile, the torch has got to be kept burning to light the path. And I want to know how many brave arms are there amongst you to take this torch from my falling hand. Be worthy of the charge.”

In international sphere he has gained the esteem of other people. His foreign policy has received added importance. What he said forms the subject of table-talk everywhere.

Referring to president Tai Chi Tao, who came to participate in Eastern Group Conference held at Delhi in November 1940, he wrote :—

“ India and China have represented throughout the ages two distinct and deep-rooted civilisations and cultures, each very different from the other and yet with numerous common features. Like all ancient countries, they have gathered round them all manner of debris in the form of old custom and tradition which hinder growth, but underneath this mass of useless material there lies the pure gold that has kept them going for all these ages. Not all the degradation and misfortunes that have befallen both India and China have melted this golden core which made them great in the past and which even to-day gives stature to them.

“ For many years now, and more especially for the last three years and more, China has been going through the ordeal of fire. How can we measure the immeasurable suffering of the Chinese people, invaded and attacked by an imperialist aggressor, bombed in their cities night after night and made to face all the horrors of modern war by a first rate power :

London has suffered greatly from bombing during the last two or three months. But what of Chungking that has had to face this bombing for years now, and yet lives? We cannot measure this suffering nor can we measure the determination and epic courage which has faced these disasters and sufferings unmoved and unbent. In the magnificent story of the Chinese people from the dawn of history to to-day there are many glorious periods and fine deeds. But surely the past three years will stand out even in that great record. These years have been years of swift transition from the past to the present and preparation for the future that is to come. The dross and debris are being burned away in the fire of a national suffering and the pure metal comes out. We in India have had our own share of trials and tribulations and are likely to have much more of it in the near future. So nations who are slothful and who have sunk into subjection are made again. So China and India are being rejuvenated.

While Jawaharlal is all sympathy for the downtrodden countries, he has nothing but honest disgust for the war-mongers of Europe. Thus he wrote on the eve of the Second World War :—

“Nationalism is in ill odour to-day in the West, and has become the parent of aggressiveness, intolerance and brutal violence. All that is reactionary seeks shelter under that name—Fascism, Imperialism, race bigotry and the crushing of that free spirit of inquiry which gave the semblance of greatness to Europe in the nineteenth century. Culture succumbs before its onslaught and civilisation decays. Democracy and freedom are its pet aversions and in its name innocent men, women, and children in Spain are bombed to death, and fierce race persecution takes place. It was nationalism that built up the nations of Europe a hundred years or more ago and provided the background for that civilisation whose end seems to be

drawing near. And it is Nationalism which is the driving force to-day in the countries of the East which suffer under foreign domination and seek freedom. To them it brings unity and vitality and a lifting of the burdens of the spirit which subjection entails. There is virtue in it up to a certain stage ; till then it is a progressive force adding to human freedom. But even then it is a narrowing creed and a nation seeking freedom, like a person who is sick can think of little besides its own struggle, and its own misery."

Jawaharlal Nehru has been quick to notice the reactions of Indian masses to psychological relation between nationalism and internationalism : —

" Perhaps nothing is so surprising in India to-day as this anxious interest in foreign affairs and the realisation that her own struggle for freedom is a part of the world struggle. And this interest is by no means confined to the intelligentsia, but goes deep down to the worker, the petty shopkeeper and even to a small extent to the peasant. The invasion of Manchuria by Japan caused a wave of sympathy for China, and Japan which had so far been popular with Indians, began to be disliked. The rape of Abyssinia by Italy was deeply felt and resented. The tragic events of Central Europe produced profound impression. But most of all India felt, almost as a personal sorrow, the revolt against the Republic of Spain and the invasion of China, with all their attendant horrors. Thousands of demonstrations were held in favour of Spain and China and out of our poverty we extended our helping hand to them in the shape of food and medical missions.

" This reaction in India was not due primarily to humanitarian reasons, but to growing realisation of the significance of the conflicts in the world, and to an intelligent self-interest. We saw in Fascism the mirror of the imperialism from which we had suffered, and in the growth of Fascism

we saw defeat for freedom and democracy, for which we struggled with our long experience of British Imperialism, we distrusted the assurance so often given, of British support of collective security and League of Nations.

“ Because of this we followed, perhaps with greater clarity than elsewhere the development of British foreign policy, towards co-operation with the Fascist powers, and our opposition to British Imperialism became a part of our opposition to all Imperialism and Fascism.

“ To this British foreign policy we were entirely opposed and yet as parts of the empire, we were bound by it. By resolution, and public declaration we dissociated ourselves from it, and endeavoured in such ways as were open to us to develop our foreign policy. The medical mission that we sent to China or the foodstuffs that went from India to Spain were our methods of asserting our foreign policy and dissociating ourselves from that of Britain. We laid down further our line of action in the event of World War breaking out. It was for the people of India to determine whether India would join a war or not, and any decision imposed upon us by Britain would be resisted. Nor were we prepared on any account to permit our resources to be exploited for an Imperialist War.

“ The Indian Nationalist Movement has stood for many years for full independence and severance of our tie with the British Empire. Recent events in Europe have made this an urgent necessity for us.....We must control our foreign policy, our finances and our defences, and have perfect freedom to develop our own contacts with other countries.”

Jawaharlal, like a general, was irritated to find the Muslim League lagging behind when India embarked on do-and-die struggle for independence in the dust-clouds of the European War. The cowardly attitude of Mr. Jinnah and



his chicken-hearted camp-followers broke the best hopes of the young Indian hero. Thus he writes in a plaintive tone :—

“The position of the Muslim League has been cleared up beyond any possibility of misunderstanding. We had welcomed the League’s acceptance of Independence as its objective three years ago and the widening of the basis of its membership. But we were soon to realise that the old politically reactionary outlook held the field still. Under cover of communal propaganda, the Muslim masses were prevented from realising this. We are not for the moment discussing the communal demands of the League. They may be right or wrong. It is conceivable for a person to be a communalist and yet an ardent believer in political freedom, though at some stage or other, a conflict will arise between these two loyalties. The Congress has often erred in the petty issues of politics, but it has always shown an unerring instinct whenever a major issue arose. The League, on the other hand, has a remarkable record of being wrong on the major issues, though it may occasionally be right on some trivial matter.

“It is a tragedy that at this supreme crisis in our national history, the League should have sided with full-blooded reaction. We do not believe that many of its own members agree with this attitude. We are certain that the Muslim masses are firm adherents of Indian freedom. In some communal matter the League may represent them, but it certainly does not do so in matters political.”

Jawaharlal has a clear-cut vision about the defence policy of India. It is worth while to understand this young statesman on a matter which has been the most ticklish part of British imperialism. Pandit Nehru nutshell his arguments about India’s defence as follows :—

“A war policy for a nation must inevitably first take into consideration the defence of the country. India must feel that

she is taking part in her own defence and is preserving her own freedom as well as helping in the struggle for freedom elsewhere. The army have to be considered a national army, and not a mercenary force owing allegiance to someone else. It is on this national basis that recruitment should take place, so that our soldiers should not merely be common fodder but fighters for their country and for freedom.

“ In addition to this it will be necessary to have a large-scale organisation for Civil Defence on a militia basis. All this can be done by a popular Government.

“ Even more important is the development of industries to supply war and other needs. Industries must develop on a vast scale in India during the war-time. They must not be allowed to grow in a haphazard way, but should be planned and controlled in the national interest and with due safeguards for workers. The National Planning Committee can be of great assistance in this work.

“ As the war progresses and consumes more and more commodities, planned production and distribution will be organised over the world, and gradually a world-planned economy will appear. The capitalist system will recede into the back-ground, and it may be that international control of Industry will take its place. India, as an important producer must have a say in any such control.

“ Finally, India must speak as a free nation at the Peace Conference. We have endeavoured to indicate what the war and peace aims of those who speak for democracy should be, and in particular how they be applied to India. The list is not exhaustive, but it is solid foundation to build upon, and an incentive for the great effort needed. We have not touched upon the problem of a re-organisation of the world after the War, though we think some such re-organisation is essential and inevitable.

“ Will the statesmen, and peoples of the world, and especially of the warring countries, be wise and far-seeing enough to follow the path we have pointed out ? We do not know. But here in India, let us forget our differences, our Leftism and Rightism, and think of these vital problems that face us, and insistently demand solution. The world is pregnant with possibilities. It has no pity at any time for the weak or the ineffective or the disunited. To-day, when nations fight desperately for survival, only those who are far-seeing and disciplined and united in action will play a role in the history that is being made.”

Unlike Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal encourages interest in and progress of science, because he knows that science is vital to India of to-morrow :—

“ Who indeed can afford to ignore science to-day ? At every turn we have to seek its aid, and the whole fabric of the world to-day is of its making. During the ten thousand years of human civilisation, science came in with one vast sweep a century and a half ago, and during these 150 years it proved more revolutionary and explosive than anything that had gone before. We who live in this age of science live in an environment and under conditions which are totally different from those of the pre-scientific age. But few realise this in its completeness, and they seek to understand the problems of to-day by a reference to a yesterday that is dead and gone.

“ We have vast problems to face and to solve. They will not be solved by the politician alone, for they may not have the vision or the expert knowledge : they will not be solved by the scientists alone, for they will not have the power to do so or the larger outlook which takes everything into its ken. They can and will be solved by the co-operation of the two for a well-defined and definite social objective.

"That objective is necessary, for without it our efforts are vain and trivial and lack co-ordination. We have seen in Soviet Russia, how a consciously-held objective, backed by co-ordinated effort can change a backward country into an advanced industrial State, with an ever-rising standard of living. Some such method we shall have to pursue if we are to make rapid progress.

"The greatest of our problems is that of the land, but intimately connected with it is that of Industry. And side by side with these go the social services. All of these will have to be tackled together and co-ordinated together. This is a vast undertaking, but it will have to be shouldered."

Jawaharlal is in favour of a "Forward Policy" like that of Russia, but he is not blind to the peculiar conditions prevailing in India :

"I recognise, however, that it may not be possible for a body constituted as is this National Congress, and in the present circumstances of the country to adopt a full Socialistic programme.

"But we must realise that the philosophy of Socialism has gradually permeated the entire structure of society the world over, and almost the only points in dispute are the pace and the methods of advance to its full realisation. India will have to go that way, too, if she seeks to end her poverty and inequality though she may evolve her own methods and may adapt the idea to the genius of her race."

The true civic ideal is the socialist idea, the communist ideal. It means the common enjoyment of the wealth that is produced in nature and by human endeavour. That ideal can only be reached when the present social structure is changed and gives place to Socialism. Jawaharlal is strongly attracted towards Communism. He feels that the only reasonable and scientific explanation of history is the Communist one. He

does not approve of many things that have taken place in Russia. Nor is he a Communist in the accepted sense of the world. But taking everything together, he has been greatly impressed by the Russian experiment.

It aims at social reconstruction based on an elimination of profit motive. The Socialist approach is the approach of Marx. It is a way of looking at past and present history. How will Socialism come? You say that it is not likely to be achieved by the universal nationalisation of the instruments of production and distribution. Must it not involve the ending of the profit and acquisitive motive? And does it not involve the building up of a new civilisation on a different basis from that of the present? It may be that a great deal of private initiative is left; in some matters, cultural, etc., it must be left. But in all that counts in a material sense, nationalization of the instruments of production and distribution seems to be inevitable. There may be half-way houses to it, but one can hardly have two contradictory and conflicting processes going on side by side. The choice must be made and for one who aims at Socialism there can only be one choice. Jawaharlal says:—

“I think it is possible in theory to establish Socialism by democratic means, provided of course the full democratic process is available. In practice, however, there are likely to be great difficulties because the opponents of Socialism will reject the democratic method when they see their power threatened.”—(*India and the World*, p. 182).

How is this to be avoided? The democratic method has many triumphs to its credit, but Nehru does not know whether it has yet succeeded in resolving a conflict about the very basic structure of the state or of society. When this question arises the group or class which controls the State power does not voluntarily give it up, because the majority demands it. We

have seen enough examples of it in post-war Europe and the decline of democracy itself. Obviously no Socialist transformation can be brought about without the good-will, or at least, the passive acquiescence of the great majority. He says :—

“ We do not fight for Socialism in India today, for we have to go far before we can act in terms of Socialism, but Socialism comes in here now to help us to understand our problems and point out the path to its solution and to tell us the real content of the Swaraj to come.”

But before Socialism comes or can even be attempted, there must be political Independence. That remains the big and all-absorbing issue before us and whether we believe in Socialism or not, if we are serious about Independence we must join forces to wrest it from unwilling hands. But for us it is rightly said the political issues dominate the scene and without Independence all talk of Socialism or any other radical change in our economic system is moonshine. But there could be no Socialism without independence, and all of us have therefore to concentrate on the latter.

“ When everything is changing,” says Nehru, “it is well to remember the long course of Indian history. Few things in history are more amazing than the wonderful stability of the social structure in India which withstood the impact of numerous alien influences and thousands of years of change and conflict. It withstood them because it always sought to absorb them and to tolerate them. Its aim was not to exterminate but to establish an equilibrium between different cultures. Aryans and non-Aryans settled down together recognising each other's right to their culture and outsiders who came, like the Parsis, found a welcome place in the social order. With the coming of the Muslims the equilibrium was disturbed, but India sought to restore it and largely succeeded. Unhappily

for us, before we could adjust our differences, the political structure broke down, the British came and we fell."

Great though was the success of India in evolving a stable society, she failed in a vital particular point, and because she failed in this, she fell and remains fallen. No solution was found for the problem of inequality. India deliberately ignored this and built up her social structure on inequality and we have the tragic consequences of this policy in the millions of our people who till yesterday were suppressed and had little opportunity for growth. Says Jawaharlal Nehru :—

" To-day in India there is absolutely no cultural or racial difference between the Muslim and Hindu masses. Even the handful of upper class Muslims in North India, who perhaps think themselves apart from the rest of the country, bear the impress of India on them all over the place and are only superficially Persianised. Would any of them be more at home or more in harmony with their surroundings in Persia or Arabia or Turkey or any other Islamic country ? "

India's freedom affects each one of us intimately and we are apt to look upon it as a thing apart and unconnected with world events. Essentially, this is an economic struggle, with hunger and want as driving forces, although it puts on nationalist and other dresses. India's immediate goal can therefore only be considered in terms of the ending of the exploitation of her people. Politically, it must mean independence and the severance of the British connection, which means imperialist dominion ; economically and socially it must mean the ending of all special class privileges and vested interests. This can only be done by the divesting of the great vested interests in India. A mere process of changing officials, of ' Indisation ' as it is called, of giving a high office to an Indian instead of an Englishman, has no interest whatever

for us. It is the system which exploits the masses of India that we object to and which must go before any effective relief comes to the masses.

The outstanding feature of British Rule was their concentration on everything that went to strengthen their political and economic hold on the country. Everything else was incidental. If they built up a powerful central government, and an efficient police force that was an achievement for which they can take credit, but the Indian people can hardly congratulate themselves on it. "But," says Nehru "we must see the wood and not get lost in the trees. We must realise and we must make others to realise, that it is no longer possible to deal piecemeal with the great problem, for the freedom of India is one and indivisible."

India will never accept any position in an Empire by whatever name it is called. India is a great nation and a mother country which has influenced in the past vast sections of the human race in Asia, she is not a colony offshoot of another nation growing to nationhood. She wants to live in peace and friendship with all nations in the world and she is inevitably drawn to her neighbours with whom she had had thousands of years of cultural contact more especially to China and Burma in the East and Iran and other countries of the Western Asia.

Again and again Jawaharlal reverts to the ideals of Socialism :—

"India means the peasantry and labour and to the extent that we raise them and satisfy their wants, will we succeed in our task ?

"We have to decide for whose benefit industry must be run and the land produce food. To-day the abundance that the land produced is not for the peasant or the labourer who work on it ; and industry's chief function is supposed to be



to produce millionaires. However golden the harvest and heavy the dividends, the mud huts and hovels and nakedness of our people testify to the glory of the British Empire and of our present social system.

Our economic programme must, therefore, be based on a human outlook and must not sacrifice man to money. If an industry cannot be run without starving its workers, then the industry must close down. If the workers on the land have not enough to eat, then the intermediaries who deprive them of their full share must go. The least that every worker in field or factory is entitled to is a minimum wage which will enable him to live in moderate comfort and human hours of labour which do not break his strength and spirit. The All Parties Committee accepted the principle and included it in their recommendation. I hope the Congress will also do so, and will in addition be prepared to accept its natural consequences. Further that it will adopt the well-known demands of labour for a better life, and will give every assistance to it to organise itself and prepare itself for the day when it can control industry on a co-operative basis.

Whither India? Surely to the great human goal of social and economic equality, to the ending of all exploitation of nation by nation and class by class, to national freedom within the frame-work of an international co-operative socialist world federation.

All these are pious hopes till we gain power and the real problem, therefore, before us is the conquest of power. We shall not do so by subtle reasoning or argument or lawyers' quibbles, but by the forcing of sanctions to enforce the nation's will. To that end this Congress must address itself.

"Our programme must, therefore, be one of political and economic boycott. It is not possible for us, so long as we are not actually independent, and not even then completely, to boycott another country wholly or to sever all connection with it. But our endeavour must be to reduce all points of contact with the British Government and to rely on ourselves.

"We must also make it clear that India will not accept responsibility for all the debts that England has piled on her. The Gaya Congress repudiated liability to pay these debts, and we must repeat this repudiation and stand by it.

"Such of India's public debt as has been used for purposes beneficial to India, we are prepared to admit and pay back. But we wholly deny all liability to pay back the vast sums which have been raised so that India may be held in subjection and her burdens may be increased.

"In particular, the poverty-stricken people of India cannot agree to shoulder the burdens of the wars fought by England to extend her domain or consolidate her position in India. Nor can they accept the many concessions lavishly bestowed, without even proper compensation, on foreign exploiters.

"We cannot command success. But success often comes to those who dare and act, it seldom goes to the timid who are ever afraid of the consequences. We play for high stakes; and if we seek to achieve great things, it can only be through great dangers. Whether we succeed soon or late, none but ourselves can stop us from high endeavour and from writing a noble page in our country's long and splendid history."—(*India and the World*, pp. 36, 37, 38).

The land problem is the outstanding question of India and any final solution of it is difficult to see without revolu-

tionary changes in our agriculture and land system. Fendal relics and the big landlord system are hinderances to development and will have to go. The tiny holdings averaging a fraction of an acre per person, are uneconomic and wasteful and too small for the application of scientific methods of agriculture. Large scale state and collective or co-operative farms must be established instead, and this cannot be done so long as the vested interests in land are not removed. Says Nehru :—

“ Fundamentally we have to face the land problem, and the problem of unemployment, which is connected with it. I think that nothing short of large-scale collectivist or co-operative farming will deal effectively with the land question. These wretched small holdings will then disappear. Production will greatly increase and many other benefits will follow, but unemployment would not be affected thereby. In fact, by scientific farming it is possible that unemployment might even increase a little, as far as direct employment on the land is concerned, though indirectly other avenues of employment would be opened up. In order to provide employment we must absorb people in industrial development, in cottage industries, in big machine industries, and in the enormous developments of the social services, such as education, hygiene and sanitation. There are practically no social services in India to-day. The development of industry and the land would have to be planned as a whole : it cannot be dealt with in sections. If one tries to tackle one part, one finds something left over which one cannot provide for. The whole basis should be, in my opinion, not the profit motive, but producing for consumption, because if we produce for profit the result is that we simply glut the markets; we cannot sell the goods because people have no money with which to buy them; so we get over-production while at the same time many people have

nothing at all. We should organise on the socialist basis, machine industries and cottage industries. The cottage industries must not be such as would be likely to conflict with big industries because then they would collapse, but I think there will be plenty of room for the growth of cottage industries for a long time to come, simultaneously with the growth of big industries. If big industries are not developed on capitalist basis, they will deal with the essentials which are required and there will be no needless waste of energy. If all these things are taken together, I imagine we might go a little way towards the solution of the various problems that confront us. I cannot see any movement in that direction under present conditions.”  
—(*India and the World*, pp. 258-259.)

The Indian States represent to-day probably the extremist type of autocracy existing in the world. They are of course, subject to British suzerainty, but the British Government interferes only for the protection or advancement of British interests. It is really astonishing how these feudal old world enclaves have carried on with so little change right into the twentieth century.

“Many of their rulers apparently still believed in the divine right of kings—puppet kings though they be—and consider that the State and all it contains to be their personal property, which they can squander at will.

“It is perhaps unjust to blame them, for they are but the products of a vicious system that will ultimately have to go. One of the rulers has told us frankly that even in case of war between India and England he will stand for England and fight against his mother country. This is the measure of his patriotism.”—(*India and the World*, p. 28.)

We are told now of the so-called independence of the States and of their treaties with the paramount power, which are invaluable and apparently must go on for ever and ever. We

have recently seen what happens to international treaties and the most sacred agreements when they do not suit the purpose of Imperialism. We have seen these treaties torn up, friends and allies basely deserted and betrayed, and the pledged word broken by England and France. Democracy and freedom were the sufferers and so it did not matter. But when reaction and autocracy and Imperialism stand to lose, it does matter and treaties, however moth-eaten and harmful for the people they might be, have to be preserved. It is a monstrous imposition to be asked to put up with these treaties of a century ago, and in the making of which, the people had no voice or say. It is fantastic to expect the people to keep on their chains of slavery imposed upon them. We recognise no such treaties and we shall in no event accept them. (*Unity of India* pp. 31, 32.) And the only people who have a right to determine the future of the States must be the people of those States. (*India and the World* p. 29). The only final authority and permanent power that we recognise is the will of the people and the only thing that counts ultimately is the good of the people.—(*Unity of India* p. 31).

The Chief drawback in India is Communalism. Thus says Nehru :—

“ Communalism is essentially a hunt for favours from the third party—the ruling power. The communalist can only think in terms of a continuation of foreign domination and he tries to make the best of it for his own particular group. Delete the foreign power and communal arguments and demands fall to the ground. Both the foreign power and the communalists, as representing some upper-class groups, want no essential change of the political and economic structure; both are interested in the preservation and augmentation of their vested interests. Because of this, both cannot tackle the real economic problems which confront the country, for a

solution of these would upset the present social structure and divest the vested interests. For both, this ostrich-like policy of ignoring real issues is bound to end in disaster. Facts and economic forces are more powerful than governments and empires and can only be ignored at peril.

"So far as the masses are concerned, there is absolutely no reference to them or to their wants in the numerous demands put forward by communal organisations. Apparently the communalists do not consider them as worthy of attention. What is there, in the various communal formulæ in regard to the distress of the agriculturists, their rent or revenue or the staggering burden of debt that crushes them? Or in regard to the factory or railway or other workers who have to face continuous cuts in wages and a vanishing standard of living? Or the lower middle classes who for want of employment and work are sinking in the slough of despair? Heated arguments take place about seats in councils and separated and joint electorates and the separation of provinces which can affect or interest only a few. Is the starving peasant likely to be interested in this when hunger gnaws his stomach? But our communal friends take good care to avoid these real issues, for a solution of them might affect their own interests, and they try to divert people's attention to entirely unreal issues and from the mass point of view, trivial matters." (*Recent Essays and Writings*, p. 73-74.)

Not a single communal demand has the least reference to the masses. If you examine the communal demands you will see that they refer only to seats in the legislature or to various kinds of jobs which might be going to fall vacant in future.

What is the programme of the Hindu Mahasabha or the Muslim League for the workers, the peasants and the lower-middle classes, which form the great bulk of the nation?

"I do not think that Hindu-Muslim unity or other unity will come merely by reciting it like a mantra. That it will come, I have no doubt, it will come from below, not above, for many of those above are too much interested in British domination, and hope to preserve their special privileges through it."

The present communal problem is entirely a political creation of upper-class groups in the various communities and has no relation to racial or cultural matters or the basic needs of the masses.

Groups of upper-class people try to cover up their own class interests by making it appear that they stand for the communal demands of religious minorities or majorities.

"And I am sure that the communal problem will cease to exist when it is put to the hard test of real mass opinion."

The bulwark of communalism is political reaction and so we find that communal leaders inevitably tend to become reactionaries in political and economic matters.

"Communalism thus becomes another name for political and social reaction and the British Government, being the citadel of this reaction in India, naturally throws its sheltering wings over a useful ally. Many a false trail is drawn to confuse the issues. We are told of Islamic culture and Hindu culture, of religion and old customs, of ancient glories and the like. But behind all this lies political and social reaction, and communalism must therefore be fought on all fronts and given no quarter. Because the inward nature of communalism has not been sufficiently realised, it has often sailed under false colours and taken in many an unwary person."

It has an economic background which often influences it, but it is due much more to political causes. It is not due to religious causes; I should like you to remember that religious hostilities or antagonism has very little to do with the communal

question. It has something to do with the communal question in that there is slight background of religious hostility which has in the past sometimes given rise to conflict and sometimes to broken heads in the case of processions and so forth ; but the present communal question is not a religious one, although sometimes it exploits religious sentiments and there is trouble. It is a political question of the upper middle classes which has arisen partly because of the attempts of the British Government to weaken the national movement or to create rifts in it, and partly because of the prospect of political power coming into India and the upper classes desiring to share in the spoil of office. It is to this extent economic, that the Mohammadans, are on the whole the poorer community as compared with the Hindus. Sometimes you find that the creditors are the Hindus, and the debtors the Mohammadans; sometimes the landlords are Hindus and tenants are Mohammadans. Of course, the Hindus are tenants also, and they form the majority of the population. It sometimes happens that a conflict is really between a money-lender and his debtors, or between a landlord and his tenants, but it is reported in the press and it assumes importance as a communal conflict between Hindus and Mohammadans.—(*India and the World*, pp. 236, 237.)

“ The real struggle in India to-day is not between Hindu culture and Muslim culture, but between these two and the conquering scientific culture of modern civilisation. Those who are desirous of preserving ‘ Muslim Culture,’ whatever that may be, need not worry about Hindu culture, but should withstand the giant from the West. I have no doubt personally that all efforts of Hindus or Muslims to oppose modern scientific and industrial civilisation are doomed to failure and I shall watch this failure without regret. Our choice was unconsciously and unvoluntarily made when railways and the like came here. Sir Syed Ahmed Khan made his choice on behalf of the Indian



Muslims when he started the Aligarh College. But none of us had really any choice in the matter, except the choice which a drowning man has to clutch at something which might save him."—(*My Autobiography*, p. 459.)

So far as India is concerned, not only does Nehru believe that a unitary Indian nation is possible but that fundamentally and culturally, it exists in spite of numerous superficial differences.

Superficial observers of India, accustomed to the standardization which modern industry has brought about in the West, are apt to be impressed too much by the variety and diversity of India. They miss the unity of India ; and yet the tremendous and fundamental fact of India is her essential unity throughout the ages. Indian history runs into thousands of years, and, of all modern nations, only China has such a continuous and ancient background of cultures.

"Like the ocean she received the tribute of a thousand rivers, and though she was disturbed often enough, and storms raged over the surface of her waters, the sea continued to be the sea. It is astonishing to note how India continued successfully this process of assimilation and adaptation. It could only have done so if the idea of a fundamental unity were so deep-rooted as to be accepted even by the newcomer, and if her culture were flexible and adaptable to changing conditions. Vincent Smith, in his 'Oxford History of India' refers to what I have in mind : India beyond all doubt possesses a deep underlying fundamental unity, far more profound than that produced either by geographical isolation or by political suzerainty. That unity transcends the innumerable diversities of blood, colour, language, dress, manners and so on. And Sir Frederick's Whyte in 'The Future of East and West' also stresses this unity."—(*Life of India*, p. 14.)

Unity is a good thing, says Nehru, but unity in subjection is hardly a thing to be proud of. The very strength of a despotic government may become a greater burden for a people; and a police force, no doubt useful in many ways, can be, and has been often enough turned against the very people it is supposed to protect. Bertrand Russell, comparing modern civilization with an old Greek republic has recently written: "The only serious superiority of Greek civilization, as compared to ours, was the insufficiency of the police, which enabled a larger proportion of decent people to escape."—(*Autobiography*, p. 435.)

But even the unity of India cannot be purchased at the cost of India's freedom. "We want no union of slaves in bondage. We want a united India but a free India, and we have no shadow of doubt that we shall get what we want."—(*Towards Freedom*, p. 187.)

Real disunity creeps in from the communal side, and we must recognize that there is an ideology, fostered by the principal communal organizations, which cuts at the root of national unity.

It will thus be seen that the forces working for Indian unity are formidable and overwhelming; and it is difficult to conceive of any separatist tendency which can break up this unity. Some of the major Indian princes might represent such a tendency; but they flourish not from their own inherent strength, but because of the support of the British power. When the support goes, they will have to surrender to the wishes of their own people, among whom the sentiment of national unity is widespread.—(*Unity of India*, p. 21.)

The question of constituent assembly is an acid test for all of us. It shows where each one of us stands. Britain refuses because she will not give up her imperialism. The Liberals in India, or the Muslim League, or other protestants, oppose because they do not want real independence, and have.

no conception of a new State, or if they can conceive of it, they dislike it. Howsoever much they might dislike things as they are, they prefer them to that new free State where the people can make or unmake. Hence the objections to adult suffrage, and even to large numbers of people being associated with this undertaking. Small committees of the elect are suggested whose chief function will be to move warily within the limits laid down by the British Government and to discuss interminable communal and counter-claims.—(*Unity of India*, p. 372.)

## CHAPTER XI

## Politics And Religion

POLITICS-cum-Religion holds no charm for Jawaharlal. Unlike other Indian leaders he has honest hatred for religion-ridden statesmanship. Even the Fast Unto Death of Mahatma Gandhi holds no charm for him. A news of such an event in September 1932 came to Jawaharlal like a bombshell. He called it a capacity of Mahatma Gandhi to give shocks to the people. Suddenly all kinds of ideas rushed into his head. Fears of Gandhiji's death upset his equilibrium completely. For two days he was in darkness. There was no light to show him the way out. His heart was sinking. "And then," he says, "I felt annoyed with him for choosing a side issue for his final sacrifice. Was this consistent with non-co-operation and civil disobedience? After so much sacrifice and brave endeavour was our movement to tail off into something insignificant?"

And then : -

"I felt angry with him at his religious and sentimental approach to a political question, and his frequent references to God in connection with it. He even seemed to suggest that God had indicated the very date of the fast. What a terrible example to set!"

Jawaharlal thought and thought. Only confusion reigned in his head. There was only anger and hopelessness. He hardly knew what to do. He was short-tempered with everybody. Most of all he was irritable with himself. "For me," he says, "the fast was an incomprehensible thing and, if I had been asked before the decision had been taken, I would certainly have spoken strongly against it."

Jawaharlal cannot accept the present social order in India. A conflict rages within him. His soul is torn between rival loyalties. He feels lonely and homeless. To him India seems a strange and bewildering land. He cannot enter into the spirit of his countrymen. The old world seems to envelop them. The new world is yet far distant. Thus he formulates his convictions :—

"India is supposed to be a religious country above everything else, and Hindu and Muslim and Sikh and others take pride in their faiths and testify to their truth by breaking heads. The spectacle of what is called religion or at any rate organised religion, in India and elsewhere has filled me with horror, and I have frequently condemned it and wished to make a clean sweep of it. Almost always it seems to stand for blind belief and reaction, dogma and bigotry, superstition and exploitation, and the preservation of vested interests."

Organised religion to-day is an empty form. It is devoid of real content. G. K. Chesterton, says Nehru, has compared it to a fossil. A fossil is a form of organism from which all its own organic substance has entirely disappeared. The fossil of religion keeps its shape, because it has been filled up by some totally different substance. "And even where something of value still remains," says Nehru, "it is enveloped by other and harmful contents."

Religion has become putrified all over the world. "The Church of England," says Nehru, "is perhaps the most obvious example of a religion which is putrified on its very real seat of the world." The Church of England has been a State political department, says Nehru.

"In India the Church of England has been a political machine of battle from the Government. It has been a part of the Indian revenue system and has been a part of the imperial system run as the talisman of the British Empire."

Church has been, on the whole, a conservative and reactionary force in Indian politics and generally opposed to reform or advance. The average missionary is usually wholly ignorant of India's past history and culture and does not take the slightest trouble to find out what it was or is. He is more interested in pointing out the sins and failings of the heathen."

The Church of England indirectly influences politics in India. Jawaharlal quotes an excellent example. At a Provincial conference of the U.P. Indian Christians held at Cawnpore in 1934, Mr. E. V. David said: "As Christians we are bound by our religion to loyalty to the King, who is the Defender of our Faith." Inevitably that meant, says Nehru, support of the British Imperialism in India.

The word religion is likely to be interpreted in different ways by different people. "Probably," says Nehru, "to no two persons will the same complex of ideas and images arise on hearing or reading this word." Among these ideas and images are, rites, sacred books, dogmas, morals, love, fear, hatred, charity, sacrifice, asceticism, fasting, feasting, prayer, ancient history, marriage, death, the next world, riots and the breaking of heads." The word 'religion' has lost all precise significance. Pandit Nehru suggests a way out.

"It would be far better if it was dropped from use altogether and other words with more limited meanings were used instead, such as : theology, philosophy, morals, ethics, spirituality, metaphysics, duty, ceremonial, etc. Even these words are vague enough, but they have a much more limited range than 'religion'. A great advantage would be that these words have not yet attached to themselves, to the same extent, the passions and emotions that surround and envelop the word 'religion'."

But what is religion? A very modern definition of religion, says Nehru, "with which the men of religion will not agree," is that of Professor John Dewey :

"Any activity pursued on behalf of an ideal end against obstacles, and in spite of threats of personal loss, because of conviction of its general and enduring value, is religious in quality."

Jawaharlal regards this as the best definition of religion. Let us not forget that, according to Pandit Nehru, patriotism is the only religion.

## CHAPTER XII

## Voice of Nationalism

ONE of the most cudgelling questions in India has been the problem of national language. It has become, what Mahatma Gandhi has aptly called "an unfortunate controversy." The controversy has become mixed with the political whirlpool and has taken an ugly turn. High excitement has accompanied it. Charges and counter-charges have been flung about. "A subject," says Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, "eminently suited for calm and scholarly consideration and academic debate has been dragged down to the level of the market place and communal passions have centred round it." Many self-styled champions have entered the field of battle. They have little to do with scholarship. They have little love of a language for its own sake. The real lovers of language have wondered at the vulgar pros and cons. They have carefully kept away from it. And yet we cannot keep away from it. Nor can we ignore it. The question of language is vitally bound with the question of nationalism.

Language, according to Pandit Nehru, is "the embodiment of culture." It is airy thought caught in the network of words and phrases. Language is the sum of ideas crystallized. It is not merely a bundle of words, but of fine shades of meaning. Music and rhythm accompany it. Every language has a fascinating history. It is a picture of life in all its phases. The foes of freedom have often asserted that India is a babel of languages. It is looked upon as having hundreds and hundreds of tongues. "India," says Pandit Nehru, "as everyone who looks round him can see, has singularly few



languages considering its vast size, and these are intimately allied to each other. India has also one dominant and widespread language which, with its variations, covers a vast area and numbers its votaries by the hundred million." Therefore, the communal colouring of the linguistic question is a temporary matter. It will pass. What we do really require is a scheme of general mass education. We want badly a plan for the cultural development of the people. "How shall we promote the unity of India," asks Jawaharlal, "and yet preserve the rich diversity of our inheritance?"

Language is the voice of nationalism. A great language is ever of great consequence for a great people. Pandit Nehru quotes Milton in support of his argument. Milton wrote from Florence to a friend three hundred years ago :—

"Nor is it to be considered of small consequence what language, pure or corrupt, a people has, or what is their customary degree of propriety in speaking it.....for let the words of a country be in part unhandsome and offensive in themselves, in part debased by wear and wrongly used, and what do they declare, but, by no light indication, that the inhabitants of that country are an indolent, idle, yawning race, with minds already long prepared for any amount of servility? On the other hand we have never heard that any empire, any state, did not at least flourish in a middling degree as long as its own liking and care for its language lasted."

Language is a living instrument of democracy. It is a throbbing, vital thing. Ever growing and ever flowing, it mirrors the people. The language has its roots in the masses. It stirs their hearts in times of national danger. "How then, says Pandit Nehru, "can we change it or shape it to our liking by resolutions or orders from above? Mass propaganda

can achieve a little. Radio and cinema can do something. But they can only mirror the rapid changes taking place among the people themselves. The masses are the fountain-head of language. The people alone are the parliament in which the question of language can be finally decided. "If a language," says Pt. Nehru, "loses touch with the people, it loses its vitality and becomes an artificial lifeless thing, instead of the thing of life and strength and joy that it should be. Attempts to force the growth of a language in a particular direction are likely to end in distorting it and crushing its spirit."

What should be the place of the State in regard to language? Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru puts this question and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru alone can answer it. In matters such as these Pandit Nehru represents the very soul of the Congress. Reserving prophethood of non-violence for himself, Mahatma Gandhi has left his young lieutenant in dictatorship of the whole arena of social activities. The Congress, says Pandit Nehru, has "briefly but clearly and definitely" clarified its attitude in the resolution on Fundamental Rights:—"The culture, language and script of the minorities and of the different linguistic areas shall be protected." The Congress is bound by this resolution. No minority can require a greater assurance. While the common language of the country should be Hindustani, the provincial languages should be dominant in their respective areas. A language cannot be imposed by resolution. "Our great provincial languages," says Pandit Nehru, "are no dialects or vernaculars as the ignorant sometimes call them. They are ancient languages with a rich inheritance, each spoken by many millions of persons, each tied up inextricably with the life and culture and ideas of the masses as well as of the upper classes. "The masses can only grow culturally through the medium of their own language. Therefore, the Congress lays stress on provincial languages. They carry on most of their

work through them.' The use of any other language will isolate the educated few from the masses. It will retard the growth of the people. A local language develops contact with the masses rapidly. The Congress message reaches the most distant hamlet. The political consciousness of the masses grows. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru groups the languages of India as follows :—

I. HINDUSTANI with its principal aspects of Hindi and Urdu, and its various dialects.

II. BRANCHES OF HINDUSTANI :—Bengali, Marathi and Gujrati, sister languages of Hindi and nearly allied to it.

III. SOUTHERN LANGUAGES :—Tamil, Telugu, Khannada and Malayalam.

IV. NORTHERN LANGUAGES :—Panjabi and Pushto.

V. MISCELLANEOUS :—Ooriya, Assamese and Sindhi.

"Without infringing in the least on the domain of the provincial languages," says Pandit Nehru, "we must have a common all-India medium of communication." Some people imagine that English might serve as such. To some extent English has served as such. That applies only to the "upper classes and for all-India political purposes." We cannot think of English in term of the masses. "We cannot educate millions of people," says Jawaharlal, "in a totally foreign language." Nevertheless, English will always have some claim on our attention. We have our past association with English. And English had its present importance in the world. "It will be the principal medium for us to communicate with the outside world, though I hope it will not be the only medium for this purpose." Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru wants us to cultivate other foreign languages such as French, German, Russian, Spanish, Italian, Chinese and Japanese besides English.

"The only possible all-India language," says Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, "is Hindustani. Already it is spoken by a hundred and twenty millions and partly understood by a great of

millions of others. Even those who do not know it at all, at present can learn it far more easily than a foreign language. There are many common words in all the languages of India, but what is far more important is the common cultural background of these languages, the similarity of ideas and the many linguistic affinities. This makes it relatively easy for an Indian to learn another Indian language."

Hindustani is the golden mean between Hindi and Urdu. It is spoken and written in the two scripts. There are many variations in Hindustani. Numerous dialects have arisen. But these are due to want of education. With mass education these dialects will tend to disappear. A certain standardisation will set in. There is also the question of script. Devanagari and Urdu script are utterly different. Therefore, wisely we have agreed that both should have full play. No other course is open to us. Both the scripts are the part of the genius of our language. There is around them a wall of sentiment. This is a solid wall. What the distant future will bring to us we do not know. For the present both must remain.

Can we use the Latin script? It is certainly more efficient than Hindi or Urdu. In these days of the type-writer and duplicator and other mechanical devices, the Latin script has great advantages over the Indian scripts. The Indian scripts cannot fully utilize these new devices. But here comes forth the true statesmanship of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru which is the very stuff of his inner being :—

"But in spite of these advantages, I do not think there is the slightest chance of the Latin script replacing Devanagari or Urdu. There is a wall of sentiment of course, strengthened even more by the fact that the Latin script is associated with our alien rulers. But there are more solid grounds also for its rejection. The scripts are essential parts of our literatures; without them we would be largely cut off from our old inheritance."

Jawaharlal, however, suggests another r

possible to have one uniform script for Hindi, Bengali, Marathi and Gujrati. "This need not necessarily be Devanagari, exactly as it is written to-day, but a slight variation of it." The Urdu script might absorb the Sindhi script, which is very similar to it. We can have a southern script for Tamil, Telugu, Kannada and Malayalam. This development of common scripts would be a definite gain. It would bring the languages nearer.

Thus Hindustani is the mother-tongue of the North and Central India. It can become an all-India language. Hindi and Urdu are the twins. They have the same basis. They have the same grammar. They have the same fund of ordinary words to draw upon. They are in fact one and the same basic language. Yet the present differences are considerable—one is said to draw its inspiration from Sanskrit; the other sucks the milk of vitality from Persian. "To consider Hindi as the language of the Hindus and Urdu as that of the Muslims is absurd" says Pandit Nehru. Urdu is of the very soil of India. It has no place outside India. It is also the home language of a large number of Hindus. "Right up to the Revolt of 1857," says Nehru, "Urdu meant Hindi, except in regard to script. As is well known, some of the finest Hindi poets have been Muslims. Till this Revolt, and even for sometime after, the usual term applied to the language was Hindi. This did not refer to the script but to the language, the language of Hindi. Muslims who wrote in the Urdu script usually called the language Hindi." Separatism grew in the second half of the nineteenth century. Controversy centred round the scripts. The use of Court language was the chief bone of contention. The creation of official script created the trouble. Thus the British Government introduced communalism in the language. Instead of recognising both the scripts, they set them by the ears. This is the root cause of the evil. "Scratch a separatist in language," says

Jawaharlal, "and you will invariably find that he is a communalist, and very often a political reactionary."

There is another romance about Hindustani. Urdu was applied to the language of the mixed camps of the Moghals. Round about the court and the camp, many Persian words were current. These crept into the language. Away from the centre of Moghal Court life, Urdu merged into Hindi. Thus the influence of the court affected the towns far more than the rural areas. "And this leads us to the real difference between Urdu and Hindi to-day. Urdu is the language of the towns and Hindi is the language of the villages. Hindi is of course spoken also in the towns, but Urdu is almost entirely an urban language. The problem of bringing Urdu and Hindi nearer to each other thus becomes a much vaster problem of bringing the town and the village near to each other. Every other way will be a superficial way without lasting effect. Languages change organically when the people who speak them change." This is the truest key to the knotty problem of all-India language. And Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru deserves full credit for this formula.

There is another ticklish problem of language of which the young Indian statesman presents us a refreshing outlook. It is the gulf between the literary Hindi and literary Urdu. This difference is formidable. It is supposed that some evil-minded persons are at the bottom of it. Jawaharlal says No. Living languages cannot be twisted by a few individuals. We have to look deeper for the causes. "This divergence," say he, "though unfortunate in itself, is really a sign of healthy growth. Both Hindi and Urdu, after a long period of stagnation, have awoken up and are pushing ahead." They are struggling to give expression to new ideas. They are leaving the old ruts for new forms. The vocabulary of each is poor. But each can draw upon a rich source. Hindi looks towards Sanskrit.

Urdu bends towards Persian. "Literary societies, jealous of the purity of the language they use, carry this tendency to extreme limits, and then accuse each other of encouraging separatist tendencies. The beam in one's eye is not seen, the mote in the other's eye is obvious enough." Thus the gulf is increasing. It appears that these two are destined to become separate languages. "And yet," says our hero, "this fear is unjustified and there is no reason for alarm." This strikes a hopeful chord. Foresight is the keynote of healthy statesmanship. We must welcome the new life that is coursing through both Hindi and Urdu. They are trying to enrich themselves to meet the needs of a modern community. "Why should either be jealous of the other?" says Nehru, "We want our language to be as rich as possible, and this will not happen if we try to suppress either Hindi words or Urdu words because we feel they do not fit in with our own particular backgrounds. We want both and we must accept both. We must realise that the growth of Hindi means the growth of Urdu and *vice versa*." The two will powerfully influence each other. Each must keep its doors and windows wide open. And here is the characteristic master-stroke of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru founded on the rock of foresighted statesmanship :—

"I have no doubt in my mind that Hindi and Urdu must come nearer to each other, and though they may wear different garbs, will be essentially one language. The forces favouring this unification are too strong to be resisted by individuals. We have nationalism and the widespread desire to have United India, and this must triumph. But stronger than this is the effect of rapid communications and transport and interchange of ideas and revolutionary changes going on in our political and social spheres. We cannot remain in our narrow groves when the torrent of world changes

rushes past us. Education, when it spreads to the masses, will also inevitably produce standardisation and unification."

Therefore, we must not look upon the separate development of Hindi and Urdu with suspicion. The enthusiasts for Urdu should welcome the new spirit that is animating Hindi. The lovers of Hindi should equally appreciate the labours of those who seek to advance Urdu. Nevertheless, we must help in the process of unification.

"On what must this unity be based?" asks Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru.

"Surely on the masses," replies Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru.

The masses must be the common factor between Hindi and Urdu. When the writers write whom do they write for? Every writer must have an audience in his mind. The trouble is that an author writes for "the literary coteries" in which he moves. His voice and his word do not reach the much larger public. If they happen to reach this public, they are not understood. "Is it surprising that Hindi and Urdu books have restricted sales?" says Pandit Nehru. Even our newspapers barely tap the reading of the public because of the literary language. Our writers must think in terms of a mass audience. This will result automatically in the simplification of language. The flowery phrases will go. The stilted words will give place to words of strength. Let us come out of the narrow circles and find way into the heart of the masses. We must deal with their joys and sorrows. Let their hopes and aspirations be our theme. Literature must mirror the life of the people. It must find its roots in the soil. Rabindranath Tagore alone has bridged the gap between the cultured few and the masses. His beautiful songs are heard even among the humblest people. "They have not only added to the wealth of Bengali literature," says Pandit Nehru, "but enriched the life of the people of Bengal." What Tagore has done in Bengal, Gandhiji



has accomplished in Gujrat. His simple and powerful writing has awakened a new life in Gujrati language.

Can we evolve a Basic Hindustani after the fashion of the Basic English? "Yes," says Pandit Nehru. Let our scholars turn their minds to this end. The grammar should be as simple as possible. It should be a stepping-stone to further the study of the language. The vocabulary might consist of a thousand words or so. Such a basic Hindustani should be the All-India language. With a little effort from the State, it will spread with extreme rapidity. It will bring Hindi and Urdu close together. Vital words will enrich our existence. What about the use of technical words? Pandit Nehru provides the correctest answer:—

"We should be bold enough, I think, to lift bodily foreign technical words which have become current coins in many parts of the world, and to adopt them as Hindustani words. Indeed I should like them to be adopted by all the Indian languages. This will make it easier for our people to read technical and scientific works in various languages: Indian and foreign. Any other course will lead to chaos and confusion in the mind of the student who has to grapple with large numbers of technical terms, and who often has to read important books in other languages. An attempt to have a separate and distinct scientific vocabulary is to isolate and stultify our scientific growth and to put an intolerable burden on the teacher and the taught alike. The public life and affairs of the world are already closely knit together and form a single whole. We should make it as easy as possible for our people to understand them and take part in them, and for foreigners to understand our public affairs."

It brings out clearly that the Nationalism of Pandit Nehru is not a narrow philosophy. His statesmanship leads him out to the broad horizons of internationalism. While think-

ing of India he keeps the whole world in view. No wonder, his essay on *The Question of Language* is a magnificent document and deserves to be better known than it is. It may be looked upon veritably as the bible of India's national language. No wonder Mahatma Gandhi "generally endorsed" the views in a "Moving Train" on August 3, 1937. "Jawaharlal's essay," says Mahatmaji, "is a valuable contribution to a proper elucidation of the whole subject considered from the national and purely educational point of view. His constructive suggestions, if they are widely accepted by persons concerned, should put an end to the controversy which has taken a communal turn. The suggestions are exhaustive and eminently reasonable and I have no hesitation in generally endorsing them.

## CHAPTER XIII

## The Socialist Gentleman

THERE is no gun-and-butter philosophy behind the socialism of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. "The British should realize that the fact," says John Gunther, "that he is a socialist—and a gentleman—is a great asset on their side." Pandit Nehru is a gentleman Socialist or rather a Socialist Gentleman, because the former would be too meek a phrase to describe his glowing passion for socialist ideals. Socialism is for him not merely an economic doctrine which he favours. "It is a vital creed," he says, "which I hold with all my head and heart."

The Socialism of Pandit Nehru is not foreign. His ideas are deeply rooted in the soil of India. That is why he vies with Mahatma Gandhi in his magnetic hold on the mind of the masses, even though he lays no claim to Mahatmaship. In fact, he is the very reverse of a holy man. And that makes his overwhelming popularity all the more puzzling, because the religious sentiments are the very stuff of the Indian mind. No leader can hope to make much headway with the Indian people without striking the chords of a holy harp. Even Mr. Jinnah will not be where he is, if he were not playing the role of *Qaid-e-Azam*, opposite the *Mahatma* and constantly blowing bugles of the Islam-in-danger outlook in political affairs of India. But Jawaharlal Nehru? He is a dilemma. He stands upon his own feet and not upon a pair of crutches provided by a kindly priest. He hates mysticism. He detests ritualism. Religion for him is a killer. He is neither a

all-out game for modernization. "The spectacle of what is called religion," says Nehru, "or at any rate organised religion, in India and elsewhere, has filled me with horror, and I have frequently condemned it and wished to make a clean sweep of it." And yet this religion hater dominates the hearts of the most religious men in a country over-ridden by the priests and mullahs!

The key to the dilemma lies in one word. And that word is—*Sincerity*. Pandit Nehru is so sincere a statesman that his eloquence is quite disarming. For an Indian he is not so "baffling a creature" as he might sometime appear to a foreigner. He is an aristocrat who became a socialist, going from East to West, and then back to the Indian soil. A man with a modern mind, his Socialism is founded on rational outlook. Thus Pandit Nehru holds a unique position in India, which John Gunther is pleased to call, although not with much justice, "the continent of caste and holy cattle." At any rate, the philosophy of Jawaharlal springs from the soil and consequently it is coming increasingly to hold its own in a cesspool of rival faiths. This task he has but partly accomplished, and partly it is still in the process of being hammered on the anvil. Only a statesman of Pandit Nehru's calibre could have pitted himself against a million odds without being swept clearly off his feet like King Amanullah of Afghanistan. Says John Gunther :

"Nehru the agnostic, Nehru the modern man, faces the colossal mediævalism of India. He fights the British, but he fights the entrenched ritualism of his own people too. His position—in reverse—is roughly that of an American politician, say, who dare to come out against radios and two-car garages. His struggle is that of a twenty-century mind trying to make a revolution of material that goes back beyond the Middle Ages."

Jawaharlal has to write a modern contemporary story on a backdrop curtain of dogged ignorance and determined opposition from conservative die-hards in Indian society. And the wonder would not be if he were losing the game. The wonder of wonders is that he is winning forward his ground like a steam-roller, from a bashful boy at Harrow and Cambridge, studying Pater and Wilde, he has become the most magnificent revolutionary of India. The struggles of the hero are well depicted in his *Autobiography* which has received a thundering admiration at home and abroad. John Gunther gives the highest praise to the inner psychology of the great Indian socialist :—

“Nehru, like Gandhi, has written an autobiography, but it is a very different kind of book. The Mahatma's placid story compares to Nehru's as a cornflower to an orchid, a rhyming couplet to a sonnet by McLeish or Auden, a water-pistol to a machine-gun. Nehru's autobiography is subtle, complex, discriminating, infinitely cultivated, steeped in doubt, suffused with intellectual passion. Lord Irwin once said that no one could understand India without reading it; it is a kind of Indian *Education of Henry Adams*, written in superlative prose—hardly a dozen men alive write English as well as Nehru—and it is not only an autobiography of the most searching kind, but the story of a whole society, the story of the life and development of a nation.”

Pandit Nehru found a gulf of difference between the political conditions found in England and in India. No wonder, life smote him ruthlessly. He had his first awakenings of socialism during the days of Rowlatt Act. The Amritsar agony and the baptism of fire gave him his first leaning towards the leftist philosophy. Towards the end of 1919, Jawaharlal travelled from Amritsar to Delhi by the night train. The compartment he entered was almost full. Most

of the berths were occupied by sleeping passengers. There was only one upper berth vacant. He took the vacant upper berth. In the morning he discovered that all his fellow passengers were military officers. They conversed with each other in loud voices which he could not help overhearing. "One of them, he says, was "holding forth in an aggressive and triumphant tone." He soon discovered that he was Dyer, "the hero of Jallianwala Bagh." He was describing his Amritsar experiences. He pointed out how he had "the whole town at his mercy." And he felt like reducing the rebellious city to a heap of ashes. "I was greatly shocked," says Pandit Nehru, "to hear his conversation and to observe his callous manner." No wonder, socialism was born in the blood and brain of Jawaharlal, as Mr. Dyer descended at Delhi station in pyjamas with bright pink stripes and a dressing gown.

Another incident occurred not long after. It was a turning point in the life of Nehru. He took his mother and wife, both of whom were ill, to Mussoorie in the north. It happened that an Afghan delegation was housed in the same hotel. It was negotiating peace with Britain after the 1919 Afghan War. Nehru never talked to any of the Afghan plenipotentiaries. After a month he was asked by the local police not to have any dealings with them. This struck him as being unreasonable. He had no intention of talking to the Afghans. Nevertheless, as a young man of spirit, he refused on principle to obey the order. Thereupon he was formally externed from the Mussoorie district. This was his first conflict with British authority. In the next few weeks he had nothing much to do. As a result he became aware of the kisans, peasants, and their grievances. The accident at Mussoorie helped him turn to the land. Already he had had vague socialist leanings. Now these began to be entrenched.

With some friends he visited the peasants in their homesteads. He saw their sufferings first hand. He heard their grievances. He learned to face the scorching heat of the Indian sun. He spoke to large gatherings. He discovered his capacity to arouse people. He filled them with the Satyagraha spirit.

The peasants showered their affection on him. They looked on him with loving and affectionate eyes. He was for them the bearer of good tidings. He was the guide who was to lead them to the promised land. Nehru looked at them and their misery and overflowing gratitude. "I was filled with shame and sorrow," he says, "shame at my own easy-going and comfortable life and our petty politics of the city which ignored the vast multitude of semi-naked sons and daughters of India, sorrow at the degradation and overwhelming poverty of India." A new picture of India seemed to rise before him. It was naked, starving, crushed, and utterly miserable. Many of these brave peasants received long sentences. When he went to prison, he came across some of them. Young men were spending their youth in prison.

Jawaharlal Nehru first saw the inside of the British jail during the non-co-operation campaign of 1921. This was the time of the first tremendous enthusiasm for civil disobedience. Hundreds of peasant heroes, guilty of no crime, fought for the privilege of being arrested. Young men and women mobbed the police lorries going through the streets. They scrambled to get inside the jails.

Nehru knows the emotional starvation of imprisonment. The chaffing of continuous confinement has a killing effect. Suffering may be necessary for clear spirit. But suffering clouds the brain. "He does not like suffering," says John Gunther, "as Gandhi does. He was not an introvert by nature, he says, but prison made him so. Jail has deeply marked and pitted this man. He cannot bear cruelty."

Pandit Nehru cannot see others suffering cruelty. Himself he can suffer any hardship. To test his courage, he withstood a *lathi* charge. He was bruised and beaten. His own mother was likewise hit on the head with canes. His wife followed him to jail. He heard of many cruel sentences. A youth was sentenced to nine years' rigorous imprisonment for carrying a revolver. Many schoolboys were flogged in jail for political offences. Here John Gunther has something very interesting to say about the birth of socialism in Pandit Nehru :—

“ Jail alone did not make him a socialist but it gave him the time and opportunity for exhaustive political study and introspection. Generally he was well-treated in jail ; he was permitted books and writing materials. His ideas on socialism took concrete form, and merged gradually with his nationalism. He began to see the Indian problem as more than a struggle between rebel nationalists and British nationalists. He became convinced that British imperialism as a capitalist growth was the real enemy, and that it must be fought from the socialist as well as the nationalist point of view. British imperialism rests on capitalist exploitation as well as on the political demands of empire ; therefore, a logical opponent of British imperialism must be not merely a nationalist but a socialist too. This is the root of Nehru's creed. In every possible way he tried to hammer it home to the Indian people.

Pandit Nehru was responsible for the resolution of complete independence at the Lahore Congress. At Karachi he was successful in persuading the Working Committee to accept a few guardedly socialist planks which were later stoutly criticized by Mr. J. P. Narain, and led to the formation of the Congress Socialist Party, a group of men who were more leftist than Pandit Nehru. Thus the extremism of Jawaharlal is not the extremist. Solidly wedded to the national demand, it appears not only just but very modest indeed. The truth is that he is



essentially a socialist of the British type in spite of his continental learnings. The milk of democracy which he sucked at Harrow is too strong an antidote for gun and butter socialism. He has nothing to do with explosive communism. On this point John Gunther speaks assuringly :—

"Another story of a different category is that Jawaharlal is a communist and that he has frequently been to Moscow, there to listen to the party line. But in fact he is not a communist, but a kind of social democrat; he has been in Moscow only once, and then for a few days in company with his father. They went as tourists to see the tenth anniversary festivities in 1927."

Social Democrat : That is the right phrase to apply to Pandit Nehru. He belongs to the school of British reformers rather than Russian revolutionaries. Now has he not anything of Fascism in him. "He is the furthest possible contrast to the mob leader like Hitler or Mussolini."

Marx and Lenin had a powerful effect on him. He was influenced by their ideas as well as their way of expression. He admired their unadorned, scientific, analytical point of view. "He says that he is certainly a socialist in that he believes in socialist theory and methods. His general approach is Marxist." Jawaharlal wrote to John Gunther :—

"I am not communist chiefly because I resist the communist tendency to treat communism as a holy doctrine; I do not like being told what to think and do. I suppose I am too much of an individualist. I feel also that too much violence is associated with communist methods. The ends cannot be separated from the means."

The truth is that Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru is a very good statesman but a very bad politician. He is too decent to be a good politician. Politics is a devil's game and has a touch of wicked wizardry about it. Neither Mahatma Gandhi nor

Pandit Nehru possesses the traits of a good diplomat. India has probably got only one politician of the stiff-necked Gladstone-Disraeli tradition. And he is Mr. Jinnah. With Pandit Nehru it is quite the reverse. "He is a gentleman," says John Gunther. "Worse, he is an English gentleman!" He has devoted his life to freeing India from Britain. But the British imprint is deep upon him. He still follows a code of chivalry. Only the old-school tie has turned to homespun cheese-cloth. Pandit, like an ordinary gentleman, has a strong sense of ingrownness and reserve. He hates political give-and-take and diplomatic hurly-burly. His political integrity is unshakable. Nothing can deflect him from the path he has chosen. He dislikes compromises. His mind is free from the slipperiness of politics. He makes definitions scrupulously and abides by them. "He is," says John Gunther "certainly one of the finest characters in public life I have ever met."

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru described his leanings towards socialism ironically, but with a good pinch of salt in a self-detached study of himself published some years back :—

"Men like Jawaharlal with all their great capacity for great and good work are unsafe in a democracy. He calls himself a democrat and a socialist, and no doubt he does so in good earnestness..... but a little twist and he might turn into a dictator. He might still use the language of democracy and socialism, but we all know how fascism had fattened on this language and then cast it away as useless lumber.

"Jawaharlal cannot become a fascist....He is far too much an aristocrat for the crudity and vulgarity of Fascism. His very face and voice tell us that. His face and voice are definitely private.....And yet he has all the makings of a dictator in him—vast popularity, a strong will, energy, pride...and with all his love of the crowd an intolerance of others and a certain